Mr. Aickin in the Character of Young Bevil.

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confident.

Act IV. Sc. 1.

Published by J. Wenman 1 May 1778.

Mr. Aickin in the Character of Young Bevil.

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confident.

Act IV. Sc. 1.

Published by J. Wenman 1 May 1778.

11770.9.2
23

THE

CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRES-ROYAL

IN

Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

By Sir RICHARD STEELE.

Illud genus narrationis, quod in perſonis poſitum eſt, debet habere ſermonis feſtivitatem, animorum diſſimilitudinem, gravitatem, lenitatem, ſpem, metum, ſuſpicionem, deſiderium, diſſimulationem, miſericordiam, rerum varietates, fortunæ commutationem, inſperatum incommodum, ſubitam lætitiam, jucundum, exitum rerum.

Cic. Rhetor. ad Herenn. lib. 1.

LONDON:

Printed for J. WENMAN, No 144, FLEET-STREET; and Sold by all other Booksellers in Town and Country.

MDCCLXXVIII.

PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr. WELSTED.

TO win your hearts, and to ſecure your praiſe,
The comic-writers ſtrive by various ways:
By ſubtle ſtratagems they act their game,
And leave untry'd no avenue to fame.
One writes the ſpouſe a beating from his wife:
And ſays, each ſtroke was copy'd from the life.
Some fix all wit and humour in grimace,
And make a livelihood of Pinkey's face:
Here, one gay ſhew and coſtly habit tries,
Confiding to the judgment of your eyes:
Another ſmuts his ſcene (a cunning ſhaver)
Sure of the rakes and of the wenches favour.
Oft have theſe arts prevail'd; and one may gueſs,
If practiſed o'er again, would find ſucceſs.
But the bold ſage, the poet of to-night,
By new and deſp'rate rules reſolv'd to write;
Fain would he give more juſt applauſes riſe,
And pleaſe by wit that ſcorns the aids of vice:
The praiſe he ſeeks, from worthier motives ſprings,
Such praiſe, as praiſe to thoſe that gives it brings.
Your aid, moſt humbly ſought, then, Britons, lend,
And lib'ral mirth, like lib'ral men defend:
No more let ribaldry, with licence writ,
Uſurp the name of eloquence or wit;
No more let lawleſs farce unenſur'd go,
The lewd dull pleaſantries of a Smithfield ſhow:
'Tis yours, with breeding to refine the age;
To chaſten wit, and moralize the ſtage.
Ye modeſt, wiſe and good, ye fair, ye brave,
To-night the champion of your virtues ſave;
Redeem from long contempt the comic name,
And judge politely for your country's fame.

EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. WELSTED.

Intended to be Spoken by INDIANA.

OUR author, whom intreaties cannot move,
Spite of the dear coquetry that you love,
Swears he'll not fruſtrate, ſo he plainly means,
By a looſe epilogue, his decent ſcenes.
Is it not, Sirs, hard fate I meet to-day,
To keep me rigid ſtill, beyond the play?
And yet, I'm ſav'd a world of pains that way:
I now can look, I now can move at eaſe,
Nor need I torture theſe poor limbs to pleaſe:
Nor with the hand or foot attempt ſurpriſe,
Nor wreſt my features, nor fatigue my eyes.
Bleſs me! What freakiſh gambols have I play'd!
What motions try'd, and wanton looks betray'd!
Out of pure kindneſs all! to over-rule
The threaten'd hiſs, and ſcreen ſome ſcribbling fool.
With more reſpect I'm entertain'd to-night:
Our author thinks, I can with eaſe delight.
My artleſs looks while modeſt graces arm,
He ſays, I need but to appear and charm.
A wife ſo form'd by theſe examples bred,
Pours joy and gladneſs round the marriage-bed;
Beſt ſcurce of comfort, kind relief from care,
And 'tis her leaſt perfection to be fair.
The nymph with Indiana's worth who vies,
A nation will behold with Bevil's eyes.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

SIR JOHN BEVIL.
Mr. SEALAND.
BEVIL junior, in love with Indiana.
MYRTLE, in love with Lucinda.
CIMBERTON, a Coxcomb.
HUMPHREY, an old Servant to Sir John.
TOM, Servant to Bevil junior.
DANIEL, a Country Boy, Servant to Indiana.

WOMEN.

Mrs. SEALAND, ſecond Wife to Sealand.
ISABELLA, Siſter to Sealand.
INDIANA, Sealand's Daughter by his firſt Wife.
LUCINDA, Sealand's Daughter by his ſecond Wife.
PHILLIS, Maid to Lucinda.

SCENE, LONDON.

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

ACT I.

SCENE, Sir John Bevil's *House*.

Enter Sir John Bevil *and* Humphrey.

Sir J. B. HAVE you order'd that I should not be interrupted while I am dressing?

Humph. Yes, Sir; I believ'd you had something of moment to say to me.

Sir J. B. I'll tell thee, then. In the first place, this wedding of my son's, in all probability, (shut the door) will never be at all.

Humph. How, Sir! not be at all! for what reason is it carried on in appearance?

Sir J. B. Honest Humphrey, have patience, and I'll tell thee all in order. I have myself, in some part of my life, lived, indeed, with freedom, but, I hope, without reproach: now, I thought liberty would be as little injurious to my son; therefore, as soon as he grew towards man, I indulg'd him in living after his own manner. I know not how otherwise to judge of his inclination; for what can be concluded from a behaviour under restraint and fear? But what charms me above all expression is, that my son has never, in the least action, the most distant hint or word, valued himself upon that great estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage-settlement, he has had ever since he came to age.

Humph. No, Sir; on the contrary, he seems afraid of appearing to enjoy it, before you, or any belonging to you——He is as dependent and resign'd to your will, as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty——You have ever acted like a good and generous father, and he like an obedient and grateful son.

Sir J. B. To be short, Humphrey, his reputation was so fair in the world, that old Sealand, the great India merchant, has offer'd his only daughter, and sole heiress to that vast estate of his, as a wife for him. You may be sure I made no difficulties, the match was agreed on, and this very day named for the wedding.

Humph. What hinders the proceeding?

Sir J. B. Don't interrupt me. You know I was last Thursday at the masquerade; my son, you may remember, soon found us out——He knew his grandfather's habit, which I then wore; and tho' it was in the mode, in the last age, yet the maskers, you know, follow'd us as if we had been the monst'rous figures in that whole assembly.

Humph. I remember, indeed, a young man of quality, in the habit of a clown, that was particularly troublesome.

Sir J. B. Right——He was too much what he seem'd to be. You remember how impertinently he follow'd, and teiz'd us, and wou'd know who we were.

Humph. I know he has a mind to come into that particular. [*Aside.*

Sir J. B. Ay, he followed us, till the gentleman who led the lady in the Indian mantle, presented that gay creature to the rustick, and bid him (like Cymon in the fable) grow polite, by falling in love, and let that worthy old gentleman alone, meaning me. The clown was not reform'd, but rudely persisted, and offered to force off my mask; with that the gentleman throwing off his own, appeared to be my son, and in his concern for me, tore off that of the nobleman; at this they seized each other; the company called the guards; and, in the surprize, the lady swoon'd away; upon which my son quitted his adversary, and had now no care but of the lady; ——when, raising her in his arms, Art thou gone, cry'd he, for ever——forbid it, Heaven!——She revives at his known voice—and with the most familiar tho' modest gesture, hangs in safety over his shoulders weeping, but wept as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation; while she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

Humph. I have observed this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

Sir J. B. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty, the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzz'd about, she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea-officer, who had serv'd in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her——

Humph. Was what, I suppose, alarm'd Mr. Sealand, in behalf of his daughter, to break off the match.

Sir J. B. You are right——He came to me, yesterday, and said, he thought himself disengaged from the bargain; being credibly informed my son was already marry'd, or worse, to the lady at the masquerade. I palliated matters, and insisted on our agreement; but we parted with little less than a direct breach between us.

Humph. Well, Sir; and what notice have you taken of all this to my young master?

Sir J. B. That's what I wanted to debate with you——I have said nothing to him yet—But look you, Humphrey——if there is so much in this amour of his, that he denies upon my summons to marry, I have cause enough to be offended; and then, by my insisting upon his marrying to-day, I shall know how far he is engag'd to this lady in masquerade, and from thence only shall be able to

take my measures; in the mean time, I would have you find out how far that rogue his man is let into his secret——He, I know, will play tricks as much to cross me as to serve his master.

Humph. Why do you think so of him, Sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you at your son's age.

Sir J. B. I see it in the rascal's looks. But I have dwelt on these things too long: I'll go to my son immediately, and while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue Tom, that I am in earnest. I'll leave him to you. [*Exit.*

Humph. Well, tho' this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain, is attended with constant mutual uneasiness. I'm sure I have enough to do to be honest, and yet keep well with them both: but they know I love 'em, and that makes the task less painful, however—Oh, here's the prince of poor coxcombs, the representative of all the better fed than taught.—Ho, ho, Tom! Whither so gay and so airy this morning?

Enter Tom, *singing.*

Tom. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are another kind of people, than you domestick ordinary drudges that do business. We are rais'd above you. The pleasures of board-wages, tavern-dinners, and many a clear gain; vails, alas! you never heard or dreamt of.

Humph. Thou hast follies and vices enough for a man of ten thousand a year, tho' 'tis but t'other day that I sent for you to town, to put you into Mr. Sealand's family, that you might learn a little before I put you to my young master, who is too gentle for training such a rude thing as you were into proper obedience——You then pull'd off your hat to every one you met in the street, like a bashful great awkward cub as you were. But your great oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became you much better than that dangling stick at your button, now you are a fop; that's fit for nothing, except it hangs there to be ready for your master's hand, when you are impertinent.

Tom. Uncle Humphrey, you know my master scorns to strike his servants. You talk as if the world was now, just as it was when my old master and you were in your youth——when you went to dinner because it was so much a clock, when the great blow was given in the hall at the pantry door, and all the family came out of their holes, in such strange dresses and formal faces, as you see in the pictures in our long gallery in the country.

Humph. Why, you wild rogue!

Tom. You could not fall to your dinner till a formal fellow, in a black gown, said something over the meat, as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

Humph. Sirrah, who do you prate after?—Despising men of sacred characters! I hope you never heard my young master talk so like a profligate.

Tom. Sir, I say you put upon me, when I first came to town, about being orderly, and the doctrine of wearing shams, to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my cloaths fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

Humph. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons because I suppos'd, at that time your master and you might have din'd at home every day, and cost you nothing; then you might have made you a good family servant: but the gang you have frequented since, at chocolate-houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance——

Tom. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen, who are well fed, and cut a figure, Sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows who are kept only to be looked at.

Humph. Very well, Sir——I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at an end, since it is arrived at persons of your quality.

Tom. Master Humphrey, ha, ha! you were an unhappy lad to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were. Why now, Sir, the lacquies are the men of pleasure of the age; the top gamesters; and many a lac'd coat about town, have had their education in our party-colour'd regiment——We are false lovers; have a taste of music, poetry, billet-doux, dress, politics; ruin damsels; and when we are weary of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our masters' wigs and linen, and marry fortunes.

Humph. Hey-day!

Tom. Nay, Sir, our order is carry'd up to the highest dignities and distinctions: step but into the painted chamber——and by our titles you'd take us all for men of quality——then, again, come down to the Court of Requests, and you shall see us all laying our broken heads together for the good of the nation: and tho' we never carry a question *nemine contradicente*, yet this I can say with a safe conscience, (and I wish every gentleman of our cloth could lay his hand upon his heart and say the same) that I never took so much as a single mug of beer for my vote in all my life.

Humph. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance. I'll hear you prate no longer. I wanted to see you, to enquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them; I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day.

Tom. Aye, Sir, he knows it, and is dress'd as gay as the sun; but, between you and I, my dear, he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dress'd I retir'd, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walk'd thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet; when he came out, he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid you know——

Humph. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

Tom. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, operas, and ridottos, for the winter; the parks and Bellsize, for our summer diversions; and, Lard! says she, you are so wild——but you have a world of humour.

Humph. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs. Lucinda, as he order'd you?

Tom. Because Mrs. Lucinda is not so easily come at as you think for.

Humph. Not easily come at? Why, Sir, are not her father and my old master agreed that she and Mr. Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

Tom. It's no matter for that: her mother, it seems, Mrs. Sealand, has not agreed to it: and you must know, Mr. Humphrey, that in that family the grey mare is the better horse.

Humph. What dost thou mean?

Tom. In one word, Mrs. Sealand pretends to have a will of her own, and has provided a relation of hers, a stiff, starch'd philosopher, and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffer'd no message nor letter from my master to come near her.

Humph. And where had you this intelligence?

Tom. From a foolish, fond soul, that can keep nothing from me——One that will deliver this letter too, if she is rightly manag'd.

Humph. What, her pretty handmaid, Mrs. Phillis?

Tom. E'en, she, Sir. This is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to our house-keeper forsooth, but in reality to have a glance at———

Humph. Your sweet face, I warrant you.

Tom. Nothing else in nature. You must know, I love to fret and play with the little wanton.——

Humph. Play with the little wanton! What will this world come to!

Tom. I met her this morning, in a new mantua and petticoat, not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing; and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new clothes———then she never fails to steal some new glance or gesture from every visitant at their house; and is, indeed, the whole town of coquettes at second hand—But here she comes; in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

Humph. Then I hope, dear Sir, when your own affair is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

Tom. Dear Humphrey, you know my master is my friend, and those are people I never forget.———

Humph. Sauciness itself! But I'll leave you to do your best for him. [*Exit.*

Enter Phillis.

Phil. Oh, Mr. Thomas, is Mrs. Sugar-key at home?—Lard, one is almost asham'd to pass along the streets. The town is quite empty, and nobody of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do so stare to see any thing dress'd like a woman of condition pass by. Alas! alas! it is a sad thing to walk. Oh, Fortune! Fortune!

Tom. What! a sad thing to walk! Why, Madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

Phil. No, Mr. Thomas, but I wish I were generally carry'd in a coach or chair, and of a fortune neither to stand nor go, but to totter, or slide, to be short-sighted, or stare, to sleer in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook, yet all become me; and if I was rich, I could twire and loll as well as the best of them. Oh, Tom! Tom! is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquette, and yet be such poor devils as we are?

Tom. Mrs. Phillis, I am your humble servant for that——

Phil. Yes, Mr. Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and know what you said to Mrs. Judy, upon seeing her in one of her lady's cast mantuas: That any one would have thought her the lady, and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy—for now only it was becoming—to my lady it was only a covering, to Mrs. Judy it was a habit. This you said after somebody or other. Oh, Tom! Tom! thou art as false and as base, as the best gentleman of them all; but, you wretch, talk to me no more on the old odious subject. Don't, I say.

Tom. I know not how to resist your commands, Madam. [*In a submissive tone, retiring.*

Phil. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you of late.

Tom. Oh, I have her! I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon, and set a prating. [*Aside.*]—Why truly, to be plain with you, Mrs. Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house.

Phil. Pray, Mr. Thomas, what is it all of a sudden offends your nicety at our house?

Tom. I don't care to speak particulars; but I dislike the whole.

Phil. I thank you, Sir; I am a part of that whole.

Tom. Mistake me not, good Phillis.

Phil. Good Phillis! Saucy enough. But however—

Tom. I say, it is that thou art a part, which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, Madam, to be serious, I am a man, at the bottom, of prodigious nice honour. You are too much expos'd to company at your house. To be plain, I don't like so many, that would be your mistress's lovers, whispering to you.

Phil. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this because I wrung you to the heart, when I touch'd your guilty conscience about Judy.

Tom. Ah, Phillis! Phillis! if you but knew my heart!

Phil. I know too much on't.

Tom. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides, she is a poor hussey; and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis——

Phil. What would the fop be at now? In good time indeed, you shall be setting up for a fortune.

Tom. Dear Mrs. Phillis, you have such a spirit, that we shall never be dull in marriage, when we come together. But I tell you, you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands.

[*He pulls out a purse, she eyes it.*

Phil. What pretence have I to what is in your hands, Mr. Thomas?

Tom. As thus: there are hours, you know, when a lady is neither pleased nor displeased, neither sick or well, when she lolls or loiters, when she is without desires, from having more of every thing than she knows what to do with.

Phil. Well, what then?

Tom. When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open to look at her own dear image in the glass.

Phil. Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of thy own prating.

Tom. There are also prosperous and good-natur'd moments, as when a knot or a patch is happily fix'd; when the complexion particularly flourishes.

Phil. Well, what then? I have not patience!

Tom. Why then——or on the like occasions—we servants, who have skill to know how to time business, see when such a pretty folded thing as this [*Shews a letter.*] may be presented, laid, or dropped, as best suits the present humour. And, Madam, because it is a long, wearisome journey, to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this to bear your charges on the road.

[*Gives her the purse.*

Phil. Now you think me a corrupt hussey.

Tom. Oh, fie, I only think you'll take the letter.

Phil. Nay, I know you do; but I know my own innocence; I take it for my mistress's sake.

Tom. I know it, my pretty one, I know it.

Phil. Yes, I say, I do it because I would not have my mistress deluded by one who gives no proof of his passion: but I'll talk more of this, as you see me on my way home——No, Tom, I assure thee; I take this trash of thy master's, not for the value of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose.

They may be false who languish and complain,
But they who part with money never feign.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE, Bevil junior's *Lodging*.

Bevil junior *reading*.

Bev. jun. These moral writers practise virtue after death. This charming vision of Mirza! such an author consulted in a morning, sets the spirits for the vicissitudes of the day, better than the glass does a man's person. But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart.—If this lady my father urges me to marry, should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? Is not she in equal distress with me? Has not the letter I have sent her this morning, confess'd my inclination to another? Nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements, too, to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible but she must give in to it: for, sure, to be deny'd, is a favour any man may pretend to. It must be so—Well then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father, I am ready to marry her——Then let me resolve upon (what I am not very good at, though it is an honest) dissimulation.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Sir John Bevil, Sir, is in the next room.

B. jun. Dunce! why did you not bring him in?

Tom. I told him, Sir, you were in your closet.

B. jun. I thought you had known, Sir, it was my duty to see my father any where.

[*Going himself to the door.*

Tom. The devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have. [*Aside.*

Bevil junior, *introducing* Sir John.

B. jun. Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant of all parents—Sure 'tis not a compliment to say these lodgings are yours—Why wou'd you not walk in, Sir?

Sir J. B. I was loth to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

B. jun. One to whom I am beholden for my birth-day, might have used less ceremony.

Sir J. B. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ to your mistress this morning. It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter; for courtship must then be over.

B. jun. I assure you, Sir, there was no insolence in it, upon the prospect of such a vast fortune's being added to our family; but much acknowledgment of the lady's great desert.

Sir J. B. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? And will you really marry her?

B. jun. If the lady is dress'd and ready, you see I am. I suppose the lawyers are ready too.

Enter Humphrey.

Humph. Sir, Mr. Sealand is at the coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

Sir J. B. Oh! that's well! Then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way, you say——

B. jun. If you please, Sir, I'll take a chair and go to Mr. Sealand's, where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

Sir J. B. By no means—The old fellow will be so vain, if he sees——

B. jun. Ay——But the young lady, Sir, will think me so indifferent——

Humph. Ay—there you are right——press your readiness to go to the bride—he won't let you.

[*Aside to* Bevil *jun.*

B. jun. Are you sure of that? [*Aside to* Humph.

Humph. How he likes being prevented. [*Aside.*

Sir J. B. No, no: you are an hour or two too early. [*Looking on his watch.*]—Besides, this Sealand is a moody old fellow. There's no dealing with some people, but by managing with indifference. We must leave to him the conduct of this day. It is the fashion of his commanding his daughter.

B. jun. Sir, he can't take it ill, that I am impatient to be here.

Sir J. B. Well, son, I'll go myself and take orders in your affair—You'll be in the way, I suppose, if I send to you——I'll leave your old friend with you—Humphrey——don't let him stir, d'ye hear. Your servant, your servant. [*Exit* Sir John.

Humph. I have a sad time on't, Sir, between you and my master—I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match—I must betray neither, and yet deceive you both, for your common good——Heav'n grant a good end of this matter: but there is a lady, Sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow—You'll pardon me.

B. jun. Humphrey, I know thou art a friend to both; and in that confidence, I dare tell thee—That lady—is a woman of honour and virtue. You may assure yourself, I never will marry without my father's consent: but give me leave to say, too, this declaration does not come up to a promise, that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

Humph. My dear master, were I but worthy to know this secret, that so near concerns you, my life, my all, should be engaged to serve you. This, Sir, I dare promise, that I am sure I will and can be secret: your trust, at worst, but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain, and tell you so.

B. jun. That's all I ask. Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee——Be patient, then, and hear the story of my heart.

Humph. I am all attention, Sir.

B. jun. You may remember, Humphrey, that in my last travels, my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

Humph. I remember it; he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

B. jun. His fears were just; for there I first saw this lady: she is of English birth; her father's name was Danvers, a younger brother, of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol; who, upon repeated misfortunes, was reduced to go privately to the Indies. In this retreat Providence again grew favourable to his industry, and in six years time restored him to his former fortunes. On this, he sent directions over, that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convoy, but took the first occasion of a single ship, and with her husband's sister only, and this daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage. For here, poor creature, she lost her liberty and life; she, and her family, with all they had, were unfortunately taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though, as such, not ill-treated, yet the fright, the shock, and the cruel disappointment, seized with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, she sickened, pined, and died at sea.

Humph. Poor soul! Oh, the helpless infant!

B. jun. Her sister yet survived, and had the care of her. The captain, too, proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having himself married an English woman, and being childless, he brought home, into Toulon, this her little country-woman, this orphan, I may call her, presenting her with all her dead mother's moveables of value to his wife, to be educated as his own adopted daughter.

Humph. Fortune here ſeemed, again, to ſmile on her.

B. jun. Only to make her frowns more terrible. For in his height of fortune, this captain too, her benefactor, unfortunately was killed at ſea, and dying intestate, his eſtate fell wholly to an advocate, his brother, who coming ſoon to take poſſeſſion, there found, among his other riches, this blooming virgin, at his mercy.

Humph. He durſt not, ſure, abuſe his power!

B. jun. No wonder if his pampered blood was fired at the ſight of her—in ſhort, he loved: but when all arts and gentle means had failed to move, he offered too his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty; demanding her to account for all her maintenance, from her childhood; ſeized on her little fortune, as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to priſon, when Providence at the inſtant interpoſed, and ſent me, by miracle, to relieve her.

Humph. 'Twas Providence indeed! But pray, Sir, after all this trouble, how came this lady at laſt to England?

B. jun. The diſappointed advocate, finding ſhe had ſo unexpected a ſupport, on cooler thoughts, deſcended to a compoſition; which I, without her knowledge, ſecretly diſcharged.

Humph. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

B. jun. Having thus obtained her liberty, I prevailed, not without ſome difficulty, to ſee her ſafe to England; where we no ſooner arrived, but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, immediately propoſed this other fatal match that hangs upon my quiet.

Humph. I find, Sir, you are irrecoverably fixed upon this lady.

B. jun. As my vital life dwells in my heart——and yet you ſee—what I do to pleaſe my father: walk in this pageantry of dreſs, this ſplendid covering of ſorrow—But, Humphrey, you have your leſſon.

Humph. Now, Sir, I have but one material queſtion——

B jun. Aſk it freely.

Humph. Is it, then, your own paſſion for this ſecret lady, or her's for you, that gives you this averſion to the match your father has propoſed you?

B. jun. I ſhall appear, Humphrey, more romantic in my anſwer, than in all the reſt of my ſtory: for though I doat on her to death, and have no little reaſon to believe ſhe has the ſame thoughts for me; yet in all my acquaintance, and utmoſt privacies with her, I never once directly told her, that I loved.

Humph. How was it poſſible to avoid it?

B. jun. My tender obligations to my father have laid ſo inviolable a reſtraint upon my conduct, that till I have his conſent to ſpeak, I am determined, on that ſubject, to be dumb for ever——An honourable retreat ſhall always be at leaſt within my power, however fortune may diſpoſe of me; the lady may repine, perhaps, but never ſhall reproach me.

Humph. Well, Sir, to your praiſe be it ſpoken, you are certainly the moſt unfaſhionable lover in Great-Britain.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Sir, Mr. Myrtle's at the next door, and if you are at leiſure, will be glad to wait on you.

B. jun. Whenever he pleaſes——Hold, Tom! did you receive no anſwer to my letter?

Tom. Sir, I was deſired to call again; for I was told, her mother would not let her be out of her ſight; but about an hour hence, Mrs. Phillis ſaid, I ſhould have one.

B. jun. Very well.

Humph. Sir, I will take another opportunity; in the mean time, I only think it proper to tell you, that from a ſecret I know, you may appear to your father as forward as you pleaſe, to marry Lucinda, without the leaſt hazard of its coming to a concluſion——Sir, your moſt obedient ſervant.

B. jun. Honeſt Humphrey, continue but my friend, in this exigence, and you ſhall always find me yours. [*Exit* Humph.

—I long to hear how my letter has ſucceeded with Lucinda.—Poor Myrtle, what terrors muſt he be in all this while!——Since he knows ſhe is offered to me, and refuſed to him, there is no converſing, or taking any meaſures with him, for his own ſervice.——But I ought to bear with my friend, and uſe him as one in adverſity.

All his diſquietudes by my own I prove,
For none exceeds perplexity in love. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE *continues.*

Enter Bevil junior *and* Tom.

Tom. SIR, Mr. Myrtle.

B. jun. Very well——do you ſtep again, and wait for an anſwer to my letter. [*Exit* Tom.

Enter Myrtle.

—Well, Charles, why ſo much care in thy countenance? Is there any thing in this world deſerves it? You, who uſed to be ſo gay, ſo open, ſo vacant!

Myr. I think we have, of late, chang'd complections. You, who us'd to be much the graver man, are now all air in your behaviour——But the cauſe of my concern, may, for aught I know, be the ſame object that gives you all this ſatisfaction. In a word, I am told that you are this very day (and your dreſs confirms me in it) to be married to Lucinda.

B. jun. You are not miſinform'd——Nay, put not on the terrors of a rival, till you hear me out. I ſhall diſoblige the beſt of fathers, if I don't ſeem ready to marry Lucinda; and you know I have ever told you, you might make uſe of my ſecret reſolution never to marry her, for your own ſervice, as you pleaſe. But I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refuſing, or complying, unleſs you help me to eſcape the match.

Myr. Eſcape, Sir! neither her merit, nor her fortune, are below your acceptance.—Eſcaping, do you call it?

B. jun. Dear Sir, do you wiſh I ſhould deſire the match?

Myr. No—but ſuch is my humorous and ſickly ſtate of mind, ſince it has been able to reliſh nothing but Lucinda, that tho' I muſt owe my happineſs to your averſion to this marriage, I can't bear to hear her ſpoken of with levity or unconcern.

B. jun. Pardon me, Sir, I ſhall tranſgreſs that way no more. She has underſtanding, beauty, ſhape, compleat on, wit——

Myr. Nay, dear Bevil, don't ſpeak of her as if you lov'd her, neither.

B. jun. Why then, to give you eaſe at once, tho' I allow Lucinda to have good ſenſe, wit, beauty, and virtue; I know another, in whom theſe qualities appear to me more amiable, than in her.

Myr. There you ſpoke like a reaſonable and good-natur'd friend. When you acknowledge her merit, and own your prepoſſeſſion for another, at once you gratify my fondneſs, and cure my jealouſy.

B. jun. But all this while you take no notice, you have no apprehenſion, of another man, that has twice the fortune of either of us.

Myr. Cimberton! Hang him, a formal, philoſophical, pedantic coxcomb——For the reſt, with all theſe crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity, and very little judgment, ſhews his ſtrongeſt bias is avarice, which is ſo predominant in him, that he will examine the limbs of his miſtreſs with the caution of a jockey, and pays no more compliment to her perſonal charms, than if ſhe were a mere breeding animal.

B. jun. Are you ſure that is not affected? I have known ſome women ſooner ſet on fire by that ſort of negligence, than by all the blaze and ceremony of a court.

Myr. No, no; hang him, the rogue has no art, it is pure ſimple inſolence and ſtupidity.

B. jun. Yet with all this, I don't take him for a fool.

Myr. I own the man is not a natural; he has a very quick ſenſe, tho' a very ſlow underſtanding.—He ſays, indeed, many things, that want only the circumſtances of time and place, to be very juſt and agreeable.

B. jun. Well, you may be ſure of me, if you can diſappoint him; but my intelligence ſays, the mother has actually ſent for the conveyancer to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda; tho' thoſe for mine with her, are, by her father's order, ready for ſigning; but it ſeems ſhe has not thought fit to conſult either him or his daughter in the matter.

Myr. Pſhaw! a poor troubleſome woman—Neither Lucinda, nor her father, will ever be brought to comply with it——beſides, I am ſure Cimberton can make no ſettlement upon her, without the concurrence of his great uncle Sir Geoffry, in the Weſt.

B. jun. Well, Sir, and I can tell you, that's the very point that is now laid before her counſel, to know whether a firm ſettlement can be made, without this uncle's actually joining in it.—Now, pray, conſider, Sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes, as it ſoon muſt, to an open rupture, how are you ſure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father, too, to hear his propoſals?

Myr. There you are right indeed; that muſt be provided againſt——Do you know who are her counſel?

B. jun. Yes, for your ſervice I have found out that too; they are Serjeant Bramble, and old Target—by the way, they are neither of 'em known in the family: now I was thinking, why you might not put a couple of falſe counſel upon her, to delay and confound matters a little——beſides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole deſign againſt you.

Myr. As how, pray?

B. jun. Why, can't you ſlip on a black wig and a gown, and be old Bramble yourſelf?

Myr. Ha! I don't diſlike it——but what ſhall I do for a brother in the caſe?

B. jun. What think you of my fellow, Tom? The rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimick; all his part will be but to ſtutter heartily, for that's old Target's caſe—The conduct of the ſcene will chiefly lie upon you.

Myr. I like it of all things; if you'll ſend Tom to my chambers, I will give him full inſtructions. This will certainly give me occaſion to raiſe difficulties, to puzzle or confound her project for a while, at leaſt.

B. jun. I warrant you ſucceſs; ſo far we are right then. And now, Charles, your apprehenſion of my marrying her, is all you have to get over.

Myr. Dear Bevil, tho' I know you are my friend; yet when I abſtract myſelf from my own intereſt in the thing, I know no objection ſhe can make to you, or you to her, and therefore hope——

B. jun. Dear Myrtle, I am as much oblig'd to you for the cauſe of your ſuſpicion, as I am offended at the effect: but be aſſured, I am taking meaſures for your certain ſecurity, and that all things with regard to me will end in your entire ſatisfaction.

Myr. Well, I'll promiſe you to be as eaſy and as confident as I can; tho' I cannot but remember that I have more than life at ſtake on your fidelity.

[*Going.*

B. jun. Then, depend upon it, you have no chance againſt you.

Myr. Nay, no ceremony; you know I muſt be going. [*Exit* Myrtle.

B. jun. Well, this is another inſtance of the perplexities which ariſe too, in faithful friendſhip. But all this while, poor Indiana is tortured with the doubt of me. I'll take this opportunity to viſit her; for tho' the religious vow I have made to my father, reſtrains me from ever marrying without his approbation, yet that confines me not from ſeeing a virtuous woman, that is the pure delight of my eyes, and the guiltleſs joy of my heart. But the beſt condition of human life is but a gentler miſery.

To hope for perfect happineſs is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain. [*Exit.*

SCENE, Indiana's *Lodging.*

Enter Iſabella *and* Indiana.

Iſ. Yes——I ſay, 'tis artifice, dear child; I ſay to thee again, and again, 'tis all ſkill and management.

In. Will you perſuade me there can be an ill deſign in ſupporting me in the condition of a woman of quality? attended, dreſs'd, and lodg'd like one, in my appearance abroad, and my furniture at home, every way in the moſt ſumptuous manner, and he that does it has an artifice, a deſign in it?

Iſ. Yes, yes.

In. And all this without ſo much as explaining to me, that all about me comes from him?

Iſ. Ay, ay—the more for that—that keeps the title to all you have the more in him.

In. The more in him!—He ſcorns the thought—

Iſ. Then he—he—he——

In. Well, be not ſo eager—If he is an ill man, let's look into his ſtratagems. Here is another of them. [*Shewing a letter.*] Here's two hundred and fifty pounds in bank-notes, with theſe words, "To pay for the ſet of dreſſing-plate, which will be brought home to-morrow." Why, dear aunt, now, here's another piece of ſkill for you, which I own I cannot comprehend—and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you ſay any thing to the diſadvantage of Mr. Bevil. When he is preſent, I look upon him as one to whom I owe my life, and the ſupport of it; then again, as the man who loves me with ſincerity and honour. When his eyes are caſt another way, and I dare ſurvey him, my heart is painfully divided between ſhame and love——I ſay, thus it is with me while I ſee him; and in his abſence, I am entertain'd with nothing but your endeavours to tear this amiable image from my heart, and in its ſtead to

place a baſe diſſembler, an artful invader of my happineſs, my innocence, my honour.

If. Ah, poor ſoul! has not his plot taken? Don't you die for him? Has not the way he has taken, been the moſt proper with you? Oh, ho! he has ſenſe, and has judg'd the thing right.

In. Go on, then, ſince nothing can anſwer you; ſay what you will of him——Heigh! ho!

If. Heigh! ho! indeed. It is better to ſay ſo as you are now, than as many others are. There are among the deſtroyers of women, the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble; who all, ſoon after their ſucceſs in their deſigns, turn to the contrary of thoſe characters. They embrace without love; they make vows without conſcience of obligation; they are partners, nay, ſeducers, to the crime, wherein they pretend to be leſs guilty.

In. That's truly obſerv'd. [*Aſide.*] But what's all this to Bevil?

If. This is to Bevil, and all mankind. Won't you be on your guard againſt thoſe who would betray you? won't you doubt thoſe who would contemn you for believing 'em? Such is the world; and ſuch (ſince the behaviour of one man to myſelf) have I believed all the reſt of the ſex. [*Aſide.*

In. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil, I will not doubt it: he has not ſpoken it by an organ that is given to lying; his eyes are all that have ever told me that he was mine. I know his virtue, I know his filial piety, and ought to truſt his management with a father, to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concern'd for? My leſſon is very ſhort. If he takes me for ever, my purpoſe of life is only to pleaſe him. If he leaves me, (which Heaven avert) I know he'll do it nobly; and I ſhall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worſe than death has happen'd to me.

If. Ay, do, perſiſt in your credulity! flatter yourſelf that a man of his figure and fortune will make himſelf the jeſt of the town, and marry a handſome beggar for love.

In. The town! I muſt tell you, Madam, the fools that laugh at Mr. Bevil, will but make themſelves more ridiculous; his actions are the reſult of thinking, and he has ſenſe enough to make even virtue faſhionable.

If. Come, come; if he were the honeſt fool you take him for, why has he kept you here theſe three weeks, without ſending you to Briſtol, in ſearch of your father, your family, and your relations?

In. I am convinc'd he ſtill deſigns it; beſides, has he not writ to Briſtol? And has not he advice, that my father has not been heard of there, almoſt theſe twenty years?

If. All ſham, mere evaſion; he is afraid, if he ſhould carry you thither, your honeſt relations may take you out of his hands, and ſo blow up all his wicked hopes at once.

In. Wicked hopes! Did I ever give him any ſuch?

If. Has he ever given you any honeſt ones? Can you ſay, in your conſcience, he has ever once offer'd to marry you?

In. No; but by his behaviour I am convinc'd he will offer it, the moment 'tis in his power, or conſiſtent with his honour, to make ſuch a promiſe good to me.

If. His honour!

In. I will rely upon it; therefore deſire you will not make my life uneaſy by theſe ungrateful jealouſies of one to whom I am and wiſh to be oblig'd; for from his integrity alone I have reſolv'd to hope for happineſs.

If. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't ſee, at your peril be it.——

In. Let it be—This is his hour of viſiting me. [*Apart.*] All the reſt of my life is but waiting till he comes. I live only when I'm with him. [*Exit.*

If. Well, go thy way, thou wilful innocent! I once had almoſt as much love for a man, who poorly left me, to marry an eſtate—and I am now, againſt my will, what they call an old maid——But I will not let the peeviſhneſs of that condition grow upon me—only keep up the ſuſpicion of it, to prevent this creature's being any other than a virgin, except upon proper terms. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Indiana, *ſpeaking to a Servant.*

In. Deſire Mr. Bevil to walk in—Deſign! impoſſible! A baſe, deſigning mind could never think of what he hourly puts in practice—And yet, ſince the late rumour of his marriage, he ſeems more reſerv'd than formerly—He ſends in, too, before he ſees me, to know if I am at leiſure—Such new reſpect may cover coldneſs in the heart—it certainly makes me thoughtful—I'll know the worſt at once; I'll lay ſuch fair occaſions in his way, that it ſhall be impoſſible to avoid an explanation——for theſe doubts are inſupportable—But ſee, he comes, and clears them all.

Enter Bevil jun.

B. jun. Madam, your moſt obedient—I am afraid I broke in upon your reſt laſt night—'twas very late before we parted; but 'twas your own fault; I never ſaw you in ſuch agreeable humour.

In. I am extremely glad we were both pleas'd; for I thought I never ſaw you better company.

B. jun. Me, Madam! you rally; I ſaid very little.

In. But I am afraid you heard me ſay a great deal; and when a woman is in the talking vein, the moſt agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

B. jun. Then it's pity, Madam, you ſhould ever be ſilent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

In. If I had your talent, or power, to make my actions ſpeak for me, I might indeed be ſilent, and yet pretend to ſomething more than the agreeable.

B. jun. If I might be vain of any thing in my power, Madam, it is that my underſtanding, from all your ſex, has mark'd you out as the moſt deſerving object of my eſteem.

In. Should I think I deſerve this, it were enough to make my vanity forfeit the very eſteem you offer me.

B. jun. How ſo, Madam?

In. Becauſe eſteem is the reſult of reaſon, and to deſerve it from good ſenſe, the height of human glory.—Nay, I had rather a man of honour ſhould pay me that, than all the homage of a ſincere and humble love.

B. jun. You certainly diſtinguiſh right, Madam; love often kindles from external merit only——

In. But eſteem ariſes from a higher ſource, the merit of the ſoul——

B. jun. True—And great ſouls only can deſerve it. [*Bowing reſpectfully.*

In. Now I think they are greater ſtill, that can ſo charitably part with it.

B. jun. Now, Madam, you make me vain, ſince the utmoſt pride and pleaſure of my life is, that I eſteem you—as I ought.

In. [*Aſide.*] As he ought! ſtill more perplexing! he neither ſaves nor kills my hope.

B. jun. But, Madam, we grow grave, methinks.—Let's find ſome other ſubject—Pray, how did you like the opera laſt night?

In. Firſt, give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

B. jun. Oh! your ſervant, Madam———

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir, here's Signor Carbonelli ſays he waits your commands in the next room.

B. jun. Apropos! you were ſaying yeſterday, Madam, you had a mind to hear him——will you give him leave to entertain you now?

After a Sonata is play'd, Bevil junior *waits on the Maſter to the door,* &c.

B. jun. You ſmile, Madam, to ſee me ſo complaiſant to one whom I pay for his viſit. Now, I own, I think it not enough barely to pay thoſe whoſe talents are ſuperior to our own; (I mean, ſuch talents as would become our condition, if we had them.) Methinks we ought to do ſomething more than barely gratify them for what they do at our command, only becauſe their fortune is below us.

In. You ſay I ſmile; I aſſure you it was a ſmile of approbation; for indeed I cannot but think it the diſtinguiſhing part of a gentleman, to make his ſuperiority of fortune as eaſy to his inferiors as he can.—Now, once more to try him. [*Aſide.*]—I was ſaying juſt now, I believe you would never let me diſpute with you, and I dare ſay it will always be ſo: However, I muſt have your opinion upon a ſubject which created a debate between my aunt and me, juſt before you came hither; ſhe would needs have it, that no man ever does any extraordinary kindneſs or ſervice for a woman, but for his own ſake.

B. jun. Well, Madam! indeed I can't but be of her mind.

In. What, though he would maintain and ſupport her, without demanding any thing of her on her part?

B. jun. Why, Madam, is making an expence in the ſervice of a valuable woman, (for ſuch I muſt ſuppoſe her) though ſhe ſhould never do him any favour; nay, though ſhe ſhould never know who did her ſuch ſervice, ſuch a mighty heroic buſineſs?

In. Certainly! I ſhould think he muſt be a man of an uncommon mould.

B. jun. Dear Madam, why ſo? 'Tis but, at beſt, a better taſte in expence. To beſtow upon one whom he may think one of the ornaments of the whole creation; to be conſcious, that from his ſuperfluity, an innocent, a virtuous ſpirit, is ſupported above the temptations, the ſorrows of life; that he ſees ſatisfaction, health, and gladneſs, in her countenance, while he enjoys the happineſs of ſeeing her; (as that I will ſuppoſe too, or he muſt be too abſtracted, too inſenſible;) I ſay, if he is allowed to delight in that proſpect, alas! what mighty matter is there in all this?

In. No mighty matter in ſo diſintereſted a friendſhip!

B. jun. Diſintereſted! I can't think him ſo. Your hero, Madam, is no more than what every gentleman ought to be, and I believe very many are—He is only one who takes more delight in reflections than in ſenſations; he is more pleaſed with thinking than eating; that's the utmoſt you can ſay of him——Why, Madam, a greater expence than all this, men lay out upon an unneceſſary ſtable of horſes.

In. Can you be ſincere in what you ſay?

B. jun. You may depend upon it, if you know any ſuch man, he does not love dogs inordinately.

In. No, that he does not.

B. jun. Nor cards, nor dice.

In. No.

B. jun. Nor bottle companions.

In. No.

B jun. Nor looſe women.

In. No, I'm ſure he does not.

B. jun. Take my word, then, if your admired hero is not liable to any of theſe kind of demands, there's no ſuch pre-eminence in this as you imagine: nay, this way of expence you ſpeak of, is what exalts and raiſes him that has a taſte for it; and at the ſame time his delight is incapable of ſatiety, diſguſt, or penitence.

In. But ſtill I inſiſt his having no private intereſt in the action, makes it prodigious, almoſt incredible.

B. jun. Dear Madam, I never knew you more miſtaken. Why, who can be more an uſurer, than he who lays out money in ſuch valuable purchaſes? If pleaſure be worth purchaſing, how great a pleaſure is it to him who has a true taſte of life, to eaſe an aching heart, to ſee the human countenance lighted up into ſmiles of joy, on the receipt of a bit of ore, which is ſuperfluous, and otherwiſe uſeleſs, in a man's own pocket? What could a man do better with his caſh? This is the effect of a humane diſpoſition, where there is only a general tie of nature, and common neceſſity. What, then, muſt it be, when we ſerve an object of merit, of admiration!

In. Well, the more you argue againſt it, the more I ſhall admire the generoſity.

B. jun. Nay——then, Madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration, that my opinion ſtrengthens my adverſary's argument—I had beſt haſten to my appointment with Mr. Myrtle, and be gone while we are friends, and—before things are brought to an extremity——— [*Exit careleſsly.*

Enter Iſabella.

Iſ. Well, Madam, what think you of him now, pray?

In. I proteſt I begin to fear he is wholly diſintereſted in what he does for me. Oh my heart he has no other view, but the mere pleaſure of doing it, and has neither good or bad deſigns upon me.

Iſ. Ah, dear niece! don't be in fear of both; I'll warrant you, you will know time enough, that he is not indifferent.

In. You pleaſe me when you tell me ſo; for if he has any wiſhes towards me, I know he will not purſue them but with honour.

Iſ. I wiſh I were as confident of one as t'other—I ſaw the reſpectful downcaſt of his eye, when you catch'd him gazing at you during the muſic. Oh, the undiſſembled, guilty look!

In. But did you obſerve any thing really? I thought he look'd moſt charmingly graceful. How engaging is modeſty in a man, when one knows there is a great mind within!

Iſ. Ah, niece! Some men's modeſty ſerves their wickedneſs, as hypocriſy gains the reſpect due to piety. But I will own to you, there is one hopeful ſymptom, if there could be ſuch a thing as a diſintereſted lover; but till——till——till———

In. Till what?

Iſ. Till I know whether Mr. Myrtle and Mr. Bevil are really friends or foes——And that I will be convinced of before I ſleep; for you ſhall not be deceiv'd. [*Exit* Iſabella.

In. I'm ſure I never ſhall, if your fears can guard me. In the mean time, I'll wrap myſelf up in

the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his.

As conſcious honour all his actions ſteers;
So conſcious innocence diſpels my fears. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE, Sealand's *Houſe.*

Enter Tom, *meeting* Phillis.

Tom. WELL, Phillis!—What, with a face as if you had never ſeen me before—— What a work have I to do now? She has ſeen ſome new viſitant at their houſe, whoſe airs ſhe has catch'd, and is reſolv'd to practiſe them upon me. Numberleſs are the changes ſhe'll dance thro', before ſhe'll anſwer this plain queſtion; *videlicet*, Have you deliver'd my maſter's letter to your lady? Nay, I know her too well, to aſk an account of it in an ordinary way; I'll be in my airs as well as ſhe. [*Aſide.*]—Well, Madam, as unhappy as you are at preſent pleaſed to make me, I would not in the general be any other than what I am; I would not be a bit wiſer, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit ſhorter, than I am at this inſtant.

[*Looking ſtedfaſtly at her.*

Phil. Did ever any body doubt, Maſter Thomas, but that you were extremely ſatisfied with your ſweet ſelf?

Tom. I am, indeed—The thing I have leaſt reaſon to be ſatisfied with is my fortune, and I am glad of my poverty; perhaps if I were rich, I ſhould overlook the fineſt woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought ſo.

Phil. How prettily was that ſaid? But I'll have a great deal more, before I'll ſay one word. [*Aſide*

Tom. I ſhould, perhaps, have been ſtupidly above her, had I not been her equal; and by not being her equal, never had opportunity of being her ſlave. I am my maſter's ſervant for hire; I am my miſtreſs's from choice; wou'd ſhe but approve my paſſion!

Phil. I think it is the firſt time I ever heard you ſpeak of it, with any ſenſe of the anguiſh, if you really do ſuffer any.

Tom. Ah, Phillis! Can you doubt, after what you have ſeen?

Phil. I know not what I have ſeen, nor what I have heard; but ſince I am at leiſure, you may tell me when you fell in love with me; how you fell in love with me; and what you have ſuffer'd, or are ready to ſuffer for me.

Tom. Oh! the unmerciful jade! When I'm in haſte about my maſter's letter—But I muſt go thro' it. [*Aſide.*]—Ah! too well I remember, when, and how, and on what occaſion I was firſt ſurpris'd. It was on the firſt of April, one thouſand ſeven hundred and fifteen, I came into Mr. Sealand's ſervice; I was then a hobble-de-hoy, and you a pretty little tight girl, a favourite handmaid of the houſe-keeper——At that time, we neither of us knew what was in us: I remember, I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of ſtairs, to rub the ſaſhes clean—the perſon employ'd on the inner-ſide, was your charming ſelf, whom I had never ſeen before.

Phil. I think I remember the ſilly accident. What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the ſtreet?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you—You could not gueſs what ſurpris'd me—You took no delight, when you immediately grew wanton in your conqueſt, and put your lips cloſe and breath'd upon the glaſs, and when my lips approach'd, a dirty cloth you rubb'd againſt my face, and hid your beauteous form; when I again drew near, you ſpit, and rubb'd, and ſmil'd at my undoing.

Phil. What ſilly thoughts you men have!

Tom. We were Pyramus and Thiſbe—but ten times harder was my fate; Pyramus could peep only through a wall; I ſaw her, ſaw my Thiſbe in all her beauty, but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls between, for there was more, there was her will againſt me—Would ſhe but relent!—Oh, Phillis! Phillis! ſhorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

Phil. I believe it's very ſufferable; the pain is not ſo exquiſite, but that you may bear it a little longer.

Tom. Oh, my charming Phillis! if all depended on my fair-one's will, I could with glory ſuffer.—But, deareſt creature, conſider our miſerable ſtate.

Phil. How! miſerable!

Tom. We are miſerable to be in love, and under the command of others than thoſe we love—with that generous paſſion in the heart, to be ſent to and fro on errands, call'd, check'd, and rated, for the meaneſt trifles—Oh, Phillis! you don't know how many china cups, and glaſſes, my paſſion for you has made me break: you have broken my fortune, as well as my heart.

Phil. Well, Mr. Thomas, I cannot but own to you, that I believe your maſter writes, and you ſpeak the beſt of any men in the world. Never was a woman ſo well pleas'd with a letter as my young lady was with his, and this is an anſwer to it. [*Gives him a letter.*

Tom. This was well done, my deareſt; conſider, we muſt ſtrike out ſome pretty livelihood for ourſelves, by cloſing their affairs: it will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, ſome ſmall tenement out of their large poſſeſſions. Whatever they give us, it will be more than what they keep for themſelves: one acre, with Phillis, would be worth a whole county without her.

Phil. Oh, could I but believe you!

Tom. If not the utterance, believe the touch of my lips. [*Kiſſes her.*

Phil. There's no contradicting you. How cloſely you argue, Tom!

Tom. And will cloſer in due time. But I muſt haſten with this letter, to haſten towards the poſſeſſion of you—then, Phillis, conſider how I muſt be reveng'd (look to it!) of all your ſkittiſhneſs, ſhy looks, and at beſt but coy compliances.

Phil. Oh, Tom! you grow wanton, and ſenſual, as my lady calls it; I muſt not endure it: Oh, foh! you are a man, an odious, filthy male creature! You ſhould behave, if you had a right ſenſe, or were a man of ſenſe, like Mr. Cimberton, with diſtance and indifference, and not ruſh on one as if you were ſeizing a prey. But, huſh—the ladies are coming—Good Tom, don't kiſs me above once, and be gone—Lard, we have been fooling and toying, and not conſider'd the main buſineſs of our maſters and miſtreſſes.

Tom. Why, their buſineſs is to be fooling and toying, as ſoon as the parchments are ready.

Phil. Well remember'd—parchments—my lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb couſin Cimberton and my miſtreſs; though my maſter has an eye to the parchments already prepar'd between your maſter, Mr. Bevil, and my miſtreſs; and I believe, my miſtreſs here

ſelf has ſign'd and ſeal'd, in her heart, to Mr. Myrtle——Did I not bid you kiſs me but once, and be gone? But I know you won't be ſatisfy'd.

Tom. No, you ſmooth creature, how ſhould I?

[*Kiſſing her hand.*

Phil. Well, ſince you are ſo humble, or ſo cool, as to raviſh my hand only, I'll take my leave of you like a great lady, and you a man of quality.

[*They ſalute formally.*

Tom. Pox of all this ſtate.

[*Offers to kiſs her more cloſely.*

Phil. No, pr'ythee Tom, mind your buſineſs.—Oh, here is my young miſtreſs! [Tom *taps her neck behind, and kiſſes his fingers.*] Go, ye liquoriſh fool. [*Exit* Tom.

Enter Lucinda.

Luc. Who was that you were hurrying away?

Phil. One that I had no mind to part with.

Luc. Why did you turn him away then?

Phil. For your ladyſhip's ſervice, to carry your ladyſhip's letter to his maſter. I could hardly get the rogue away.

Luc. Why, has he ſo little love for his maſter?

Phil. No, but he has ſo much love for his miſtreſs.

Luc. But I thought I heard him kiſs you. Why do you ſuffer that?

Phil. Why, Madam, we vulgar take it to be a ſign of love. We ſervants, we poor people, that have nothing but our perſons to beſtow, or treat for, ſqueeze with our hands, and ſeal with our lips, to ratify vows and promiſes.

Luc. But can't you truſt one another, without ſuch earneſt down?

Phil. We don't think it ſafe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

Luc. Thou art a pert merry huſſey.

Phil. I wiſh, Madam, your lover and you were as happy as Tom and your ſervant are.

Luc. You grow impertinent.

Phil. I have done, Madam; and I won't aſk you, what you intend to do with Mr. Myrtle, what your father will do with Mr. Bevil, nor what you all, eſpecially my lady, mean by admitting Mr. Cimberton as particularly here, as if he were married to you already; nay, you are married, actually, as far as people of quality are.

Luc. How's that?

Phil. You have different beds in the ſame houſe.

Luc. Pſhaw! I have a very great value for Mr. Bevil, but have abſolutely put an end to his pretenſions, in the letter I gave you for him.

Phil. Then Mr. Myrtle——

Luc. He had my parents leave to apply to me, and by that he has won me, and my affections: who is to have this body of mine, without 'em, it ſeems, is nothing to me; my mother ſays, 'tis indecent for me to let my thoughts ſtray about the perſon of my huſband: nay, ſhe ſays, a maid, rightly virtuous, tho' ſhe may have been where her lover was a thouſand times, ſhould not have made obſervations enough, to know him from another man, when ſhe ſees him in a third place.

Phil. That is more than the ſeverity of a nun; for not to ſee when one may, is hardly poſſible; not to ſee when one can't, is very eaſy: at this rate, Madam, there are a great many whom you have not ſeen, who——

Luc. Mamma ſays, the firſt time you ſee your huſband ſhould be at that inſtant he is made ſo. When your father, with the help of the miniſter, gives you to him, then you are to ſee him; then you are to obſerve and take notice of him, becauſe then you are to obey him.

Phil. But does not my lady remember, you are to love, as well as to obey?

Luc. To love is a paſſion, 'tis a deſire, and we muſt have no deſires. Oh! I cannot endure the reflection! With what inſenſibility on my part, with what more than patience, have I been expos'd, and offered to ſome aukward booby or other, in every county of Great-Britain!

Phil. Indeed, Madam, I wonder I never heard you ſpeak of it before with this indignation.

Luc. Every corner of the land has preſented me with a wealthy coxcomb. As faſt as one treaty has gone off, another has come on, till my name and perſon has been the tittle-tattle of the whole town.

Phil. But, Madam, all theſe vexations will end very ſoon, in one for all: Mr. Cimberton is your mother's kinſman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reaſon, with that of his prodigious large eſtate, ſhe is reſolved on him, and has ſent to conſult the lawyers accordingly: Nay, has, whether you know it or no, been in treaty with Sir Geoffry, who, to join in the ſettlement, has accepted of a ſum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpoſe.

Luc. How do you get all this intelligence!

Phil. By an art I have, I thank my ſtars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great-Britain: the art of liſt'ning, Madam, for your ladyſhip's ſervice.

Luc. I ſhall ſoon know as much as you do. Leave me, leave me, Phillis, be gone: here, here, I'll turn you out. My mother ſays I muſt not converſe with my ſervants; though I muſt converſe with no one elſe.—[*Exit* Phil.]—Here he comes with my mother—It's much if he looks at me, or if he does, takes no more notice of me than of any other moveable in the room.

Enter Mrs. Scaland *and* Mr. Cimberton.

Mrs. Sea. How do I admire this noble, this learned taſte of yours, and the worthy regard you have to our own ancient and honourable houſe, in conſulting a means to keep the blood as pure, and as regularly deſcended as may be!

Cim. Why really, Madam, the young women of this age are treated with diſcourſes of ſuch a tendency, and their imaginations ſo bewilder'd in fleſh and blood, that a man of reaſon can't talk to be underſtood; they have no ideas of happineſs, but what are more groſs than the gratification of hunger and thirſt.

Luc. With how much reflection he is a coxcomb!

[*Aſide.*

Cim. And in truth, Madam, I have conſider'd it as a moſt brutal cuſtom, that perſons of the firſt character in the world, ſhould go as ordinarily, and with as little ſhame, to bed, as to dinner with one another. They proceed to the propagation of the ſpecies, as openly as to the preſervation of the individual.

Luc. She that willingly goes to bed to thee, muſt have no ſhame, I'm ſure. [*Aſide.*

Mrs. Sea. Oh, couſin Cimberton! couſin Cimberton! how abſtracted, how refined, is your ſenſe of things! but, indeed, it is too true, there is nothing ſo ordinary as to ſay, in the beſt govern'd families, my maſter and lady are gone to bed—one does not know but it might have been ſaid of one's ſelf.

[*Hiding her face with her fan.*

Cim. Lycurgus, Madam, inſtituted otherwiſe: among the Lacedemonians, the whole female world was pregnant, but none but the mothers themſelves

knew by whom; their meetings were ſecret, and the amorous congreſs always by ſtealth; and no ſuch profeſſed doings between the ſexes, as are tolerated among us under the audacious word, marriage.

Mrs. Sea. Oh! had I liv'd in thoſe days, and been a matron of Sparta, one might, with leſs indecency, have had ten children, according to that modeſt inſtitution, than one, under the confuſion of our modern, bareface'd manner.

Luc. And yet, poor woman, ſhe has gone thro' the whole ceremony, and here I ſtand a melancholy proof of it. [*Aſide.*

Mrs. Sea. We will talk then of buſineſs. That girl walking about the room there, is to be your wife. She has, I confeſs, no ideas, no ſentiments, that ſpeak her born of a thinking mother.

Cim. I have obſerv'd her; her lively look, free air, and diſengag'd countenance, ſpeak her very—

Luc. Very, what?

Cim. If you pleaſe, Madam——to ſet her a little that way.

Mrs. Sea. Lucinda, ſay nothing to him, you are not a match for him; when you are married, you may ſpeak to ſuch a huſband, when you're ſpoken to: but I am diſpoſing of you above yourſelf every way.

Cim. Madam, you cannot but obſerve the inconveniences I expoſe myſelf to, in hopes that your ladyſhip will be the conſort of my better part. As for the young woman, ſhe is rather an impediment, than a help to a man of letters and ſpeculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philoſophy, can at all times ſubdue the ſenſitive life, but the animal ſhall ſometimes carry away the man—Ha! aye, the vermillion of her lips.

Luc. Pray don't talk of me thus.

Cim. The pretty enough—pant of her boſom.

Luc. Sir!—Madam, don't you hear him?

Cim. Her forward cheſt.

Luc. Intolerable!

Cim. High health.

Luc. The grave, eaſy impudence of him!

Cim. Proud heart.

Luc. Stupid coxcomb!

Cim. I ſay, Madam, her impatience, while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions—her arms—her neck—what a ſpring in her ſtep!

Luc. Don't you run me over thus, you ſtrange, unaccountable——

Cim. What an elaſticity in her veins and arteries!

Luc. I have no veins, no arteries.

Mrs. Sea. Oh, child, hear him, he talks finely, he's a ſcholar, he knows what you have.

Cim. The ſpeaking invitation of her ſhape, the gathering of herſelf up, and the indignation you ſee in the pretty little thing——now I am conſidering her, on this occaſion, but as one that is to be pregnant—And pregnant undoubtedly ſhe will be yearly. I fear I ſhan't, for many years, have diſcretion enough to give her one fallow ſeaſon.

Luc. Monſter! there's no bearing it. The hideous ſot!—there's no enduring it, to be thus ſurveyed like a ſteed at ſale!

Cim. At ſale!—She's very illiterate: but ſhe's very well limb'd too; turn her in, I ſee what ſhe is.

Mrs. Sea. Go, you creature; I am aſham'd of you. [*Exit* Lucinda *in a rage.*

Cim. No harm done——You know, Madam, the better ſort of people, as I obſerv'd to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings [*Adjuſting himſelf at the glaſs.*] and the woman, in the bargain, like the manſion-houſe in the ſale of the eſtate, is thrown in, and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all conſider'd.

Mrs. Sea. I grant it, and therefore make no demand for her youth and beauty, and every other accompliſhment, as the common world think 'em, becauſe ſhe is not polite.

Cim. Madam, I marry to have an heir to my eſtate, and not to beget a colony, or a plantation: this young woman's beauty and conſtitution will demand proviſion for a tenth child at leaſt.

Mrs. Sea. But I have given directions for the marriage-ſettlements, and Sir Geoffry Cimberton's counſel is to meet ours here at this hour, concerning his joining in the deed, which when executed makes you capable of ſettling what is due to Lucinda's fortune; herſelf, as I told you, I ſay nothing of.

Cim. No, no, no, indeed, Madam, it is not uſual, and I muſt depend upon my own reflection, and philoſophy, not to overſtock my family.

Mrs. Sea. I cannot help her, Couſin Cimberton; but ſhe is, for aught I ſee, as well as the daughter of any body elſe.

Cim. That is very true, Madam.

Enter a Servant, *who whiſpers* Mrs. Sealand.

Mrs. Sea. The lawyers are come. But good couſin, you muſt have patience with 'em. Theſe lawyers, I am told, are of a different kind; one is what they call a chamber-counſel, the other a pleader: the conveyancer is ſlow, from an imperfection in his ſpeech, and therefore ſhun'd the bar, but extremely paſſionate, and impatient of contradiction: the other is as warm as he; but has a tongue ſo voluble, and a head ſo conceited, he will ſuffer nobody to ſpeak but himſelf.

Cim. You mean old Serjeant Target, and counſellor Bramble; I have heard of 'em.

Mrs. Sea. The ſame; ſhew in the gentlemen. [*Exit* Servant.

Re-enter Servant, introducing Myrtle *and* Tom, *diſguis'd as* Bramble *and* Target.

Mrs. Sea. Gentlemen, this is the party concern'd, Mr. Cimberton; and I hope you have conſider'd of the matter.

Tar. Yes, Madam, we have agreed that it muſt be by indent—dent—dent——

Bram. Yes, Madam, Mr. Serjeant and myſelf have agreed, as he is pleas'd to inform you, that it muſt be an indenture tripartite, and tripartite let it be, for Sir Geoffry muſt needs be a party. Old Cimberton in the year 1619, ſays, in that ancient roll, in Mr. Serjeant's hands, as recourſe thereto being had, will more at large appear——

Tar. Yes, and by the deeds in your hands, it appears that——

Bram. Mr. Serjeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our cuſtody; but ſpeak to the titles in your own deeds—I ſhall not ſhew that deed till my client is in town.

Cim. You know beſt your own methods.

Mrs. Sea. The ſingle queſtion is, whether the intail is ſuch, that my couſin Sir Geoffry, is neceſſary in this affair?

Bram. Yes, as to the lordſhip of Tretriplet, but not as to the meſſuage of Grimgribber.

Tar. I ſay, that Gr—gr— that Gr—gr—Grimgribber, Grimgribber is in us. That is to ſay, the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—tr—— Triplet.

Bram. You go upon the deed of Sir Ralph, made in the middle of the laſt century, precedent to that in which old Cimberton made over the remainder, and made it paſs to the heirs general, by which your client comes in; and I queſtion whether the remainder even of Tretriplet is in him—But we are willing to wave that, and give him a valuable conſideration.

But we ſhall not purchaſe what is in us for ever, as Grimgribber is, at the rate, as we guard againſt the contingent of Mr. Cimberton having no ſon—Then we know Sir Geoffry is the firſt of the collateral male line in this family——Yet——

Tar. Sir, Gr——gr——ber is——

Bram. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclin'd to hear that in all its parts——But, Sir, I ſee very plainly what you are going to——I tell you it is as probable a contingent that Sir Geoffry may die before Mr. Cimberton, as that he may outlive him.

Tar. Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I muſt ſa——

Bram. Sir, I allow you the whole extent of that argument; but that will go no farther than as to the claimants under old Cimberton—I am of opinion, that according to the inſtructions of Sir Ralph, he could not dock the entail, and then create a new eſtate for the heirs in general.

Tar. Sir, I have no patience to be told that, when Gr——gr——ber——

Bram. I will allow it you, Mr. Serjeant; but there muſt be the word heirs for ever, to make ſuch an eſtate as you pretend.

Cim. I muſt be impartial, though you are counſel for my ſide of the queſtion——Were it not that you are ſo good as to allow him what he has not ſaid, I ſhould think it very hard you ſhould anſwer him without hearing him—But, gentlemen, I believe you have both conſider'd this matter, and are firm in your different opinions: 'twere better, therefore, you proceeded according to the particular ſenſe of each of you, and give your thoughts diſtinctly in writing—And do you ſee, Sirs, pray let me have a copy of what you ſay in Engliſh.

Bram. Why, what is all we have been ſaying?—In Engliſh! Oh! but I forgot myſelf, you're a wit—But however, to pleaſe you, Sir, you ſhall have it in as plain terms as the law will admit of.

Cim. But I would have it, Sir, without delay.

Bram. That, Sir, the law will not admit of; the courts are ſitting at Weſtminſter, and I am this moment oblig'd to be at every one of them, and 'twould be wrong if I ſhould not be in the hall to attend one of 'em at leaſt, the reſt would take it ill elſe—Therefore, I muſt leave what I have ſaid to Mr. Serjeant's conſideration, and I will digeſt his arguments on my part, and you ſhall hear from me again, Sir. [*Exit* Bramble.

Tar. Agreed, agreed.

Cim. Mr. Bramble is very quick—He parted a little abruptly.

Tar. He could not bear my argument, I pinched him to the quick, about that Gr——gr——ber.

Mrs. Sea. I ſaw that, for he durſt not ſo much as hear you—I ſhall ſend to you, Mr. Serjeant, as ſoon as Sir Geoffry comes to town, and then I hope all may be adjuſted.

Tar. I ſhall be at my chambers, at my uſual hours. [*Exit.*

Cim. Madam, if you pleaſe, I'll now attend you to the tea-table, where I ſhall hear from your ladyſhip, reaſon and good ſenſe, after all this law and gibberiſh.

Mrs. Sea. 'Tis a wonderful thing, Sir, that men of their profeſſion do not ſtudy to talk the ſubſtance of what they have to ſay, in the language of the reſt of the world; ſure they'd find their account in it.

Cim. They might, perhaps, Madam, with people of your good ſenſe; but, with the generality 'twould never do; the vulgar would have no reſpect for truth and knowledge, if they were expos'd to naked view.

Truth is too ſimple, of all art bereav'd;
Since the world will—why let it be deceiv'd.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE, Bevil junior's *Lodgings.*

Bevil junior *with a Letter in his Hand, followed by* Tom.

Tom. UPON my life, Sir, I know nothing of the matter. I never open'd my lips to Mr. Myrtle, about any thing of your honour's letter to Madam Lucinda.

B. jun. What's the fool in ſuch a fright for? I don't ſuppoſe you did: what I would know is, whether Mr. Myrtle ſhew'd any ſuſpicion, or aſk'd you any queſtions, to lead you to ſay caſually, that you had carry'd any ſuch letter for me this morning.

Tom. Why, Sir, if he did aſk me any queſtions, how could I help it?

B. jun. I don't ſay you could, oaf! I am not queſtioning you, but him. What did he ſay to you?

Tom. Why, Sir, when I came to his chambers, to be dreſs'd for the lawyer's part, your honour was pleaſed to put me upon, he aſk'd me, if I had been to Mr. Sealand's this morning?——So I told him, Sir, I often went thither——becauſe, Sir, if I had not ſaid that, he might have thought there was ſomething more in my going now, than at another time.

B. jun. Very well—The fellow's caution, I find, has given him this jealouſy. [*Aſide.*] Did he aſk you no other queſtions?

Tom. Yes, Sir—now I remember, as we came away, in the hackney-coach from Mr. Sealand's; Tom, ſays he, as I came in to your maſter this morning, he bade you go for an anſwer to a letter he had ſent. Pray did you bring him any? ſays he—Ah! ſays I, Sir, your honour is pleas'd to joke with me, you have a mind to know whether I can keep a ſecret or no.

B. jun. And ſo by ſhewing him you could, you told him you had one.

Tom. Sir—— [*Confus'd.*

B. jun. What mean actions does jealouſy make a man ſtoop to! How poorly has he us'd art with a ſervant to make him betray his maſter! Well; and when did he give you this letter for me?

Tom. Sir, he writ it before he pull'd off his lawyer's gown, at his own chambers.

B. jun. Very well; and what did he ſay when you brought him my anſwer to it?

Tom. He look'd a little out of humour, Sir, and ſaid, it was very well.

B. jun. I knew he would be grave upon't.—Wait without.

Tom. Hum! 'gad I don't like this; I am afraid we are in the wrong box here. [*Exit* Tom.

B. jun. I put on a ſerenity while my fellow was preſent, but I have never been more thoroughly diſturb'd. This hot man, to write me a challenge, on ſuppoſed artificial dealing, when I profeſs'd myſelf his friend!——I can live contented without glory; but I cannot ſuffer ſhame. What's to be done? But firſt, let me conſider Lucinda's letter again. [*Reads.*

"Sir, I hope it is conſiſtent with the laws a woman ought to impoſe upon herſelf, to acknowledge,

that your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in our family, and desiring the refusal may come from me, has something more engaging in it, than the courtship of him who, I fear, will fall to my lot. I have reasons for desiring Mr. Myrtle may not know of this letter, till hereafter, and am your most obliged humble servant, Lucinda Sealand."

Well, but the postscript. [*Reads.*

"I won't, upon second thoughts, hide any thing from you: but my reason for concealing this is, that Mr. Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper, which gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him inclines me to hope that only an ill effect which sometimes accompanies a tender love; and what may be cured by a careful and unblameable conduct."

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confident, and put herself, in a kind, under my protection; I cannot tell him immediately the purport of her letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy, and to serve him and her, by disobeying her in the article of secrecy, more than I should by complying with her directions; but then this duelling, which custom has impos'd upon every man who would live with reputation and honour in the world; how must I preserve myself from imputations there? He'll, forsooth, call it, or think it, fear, if I explain without fighting—But his letter—I'll read it again——

"Sir, You have us'd me basely, in corresponding and carrying on a treaty where you told me you were indifferent. I have changed my sword since I saw you, which advertisement I thought proper to send you, against the next meeting between you and the injur'd Charles Myrtle."

Enter Tom.

Tom. Mr. Myrtle, Sir: would your honour please to see him?

B. jun. Why, you stupid creature! Let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings! Shew him up. [*Exit* Tom.] Well, I am resolved upon my carriage to him—He is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little distrustful, which I must allow for—But here he is.

Enter Tom *introducing* Myrtle.

Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for this honour——But, Sir, you, with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit* Tom.] Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myr. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without farther ceremony, or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have farther notice taken of my message than these half lines—I have yours—I shall be at home——

B. jun. Sir, I own, I have received a letter from you, in a very unusual style; but as I design every thing in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleas'd to confirm face to face, and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

Myr. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness; and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage, and not mine; to your own safety, not consideration of your friend.

B. jun. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle!

Myr. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

B. jun. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that I understand what you would be at. But, Sir, you know I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced, to the breach of all laws both divine and human.

Myr. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil, it would be a good first principle, in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries, as——

B. jun. As what?

Myr. As fear of answering for 'em.

B. jun. As fear of answering for 'em! But that apprehension is just or blameable, according to the object of that fear——I have often told you, in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into his presence. I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against him, and immediately to urge on to his tribunal.

Myr. Mr. Bevil, I must tell you, this coolness, this gravity, this shew of conicience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have, indeed, the best excuse for life, the hopes of possessing Lucinda: but, consider, Sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it, if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her, shall be to let her see the dauntless man who is to be her guardian and protector.

B. jun. Sir, shew me but the least glimpse of argument, that I am authoris'd, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will shew thee, to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage. Slight, inconsiderate man! There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger; and you shall, you know not why, be cool, as you have, you know not why, been warm.

Myr. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You, perhaps, who know not what it is to love, who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign trinket, for your loose hours; and from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honour; you know nothing of what it is to be alarmed, to be distracted, with anxiety and terror of losing more than life. Your marriage, happy man! goes on like common business, and in the interim, you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess, for your soft moments of dalliance; your convenient, your ready Indiana.

B. jun. You have touched me beyond the patience of a man; and I'm excuseable in the guard of innocence, or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more, to accept your invitation, and observe your letter—Sir, I'll attend you.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Did you call, Sir? I thought you did. I heard you speak aloud.

B. jun. Yes; go call a coach.

Tom. Sir—Master—Mr. Myrtle—Friends—Gentlemen——What d'ye mean? I am but a servant, or——

B. jun. Call a coach. [*Exit* Tom.

[*A long pause, walking sullenly by each other.*

[*Aside.*] Shall I, though provoked to the uttermost, recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine.

[*Shutting the door.*

[*To* Myrtle.] I have, thank heaven, had time to recollect myſelf, and ſhall not, for fear of what ſuch a raſh man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the falſe appearances under which your infirmity of temper makes you ſuffer; when, perhaps, too much regard to a falſe point of honour, makes me prolong that ſuffering.

Myr. I am ſure, Mr. Bevil cannot doubt, but I had rather have ſatisfaction from his innocence, than his ſword.

B. jun. Why then would you aſk it firſt that way?

Myr. Conſider, you kept your temper yourſelf no longer than till I ſpoke to the diſadvantage of her you loved.

B. jun. True. But let me tell you, I have ſaved you from the moſt exquiſite diſtreſs, even though you had ſucceeded in the diſpute. I know you ſo well, that I am ſure, to have found this letter about a man you had killed, would have been worſe than death to yourſelf—Read it——When he is thoroughly mortify'd, and ſhame has got the better of jealouſy, he will deſerve to be aſſiſted towards obtaining Lucinda. [*Aſide.*

Myr. With what a ſuperiority has he turned the injury on me, as the aggreſſor! I begin to fear I have been too far tranſported—"A treaty in our family!" Is not that ſaying too much? I ſhall relapſe——But I find (on the poſtſcript) "ſomething like jealouſy"—With what face can I ſee my benefactor, my advocate, whom I have treated like a betrayer.——Oh, Bevil! with what words ſhall I—

B. jun. There needs none; to convince, is much more than to conquer.

Myr. But can you———

B. jun. You have o'erpaid the inquietude you gave me, in the change I ſee in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! thy face is alter'd to that of another man; to that of my companion, my friend.

Myr. That I could be ſuch a precipitate wretch!

B. jun. Pray no more.

Myr. Let me reflect how many friends have died by the hands of friends, for want of temper; and you muſt give me leave to ſay again and again, how much I am beholden to that ſuperior ſpirit you have ſubdued me with. What had become of one of us, or perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reaſon!

B. jun. I congratulate to us both the eſcape from ourſelves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myr. Dear Bevil, your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly, but what is conducted by reaſon, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and juſtice; and yet how many have been ſacrificed to that idol, the unreaſonable opinion of men! Nay, they are ſo ridiculous in it, that they often uſe their ſwords againſt each other with diſſembled anger and real fear.

Betray'd by honour, and compell'd by ſhame,
They hazard being, to preſerve a name.
Nor dare enquire into the dread miſtake,
Till plung'd in ſad eternity they wake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *St. James's Park.*

Enter Sir John Bevil *and* Mr. Sealand.

Sir J. B. Give me leave, however, Mr. Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the buſineſs of an ancient houſe——Genealogy and deſcent are to be of ſome conſideration in an affair of this ſort———

Mr. Sea. Genealogy and deſcent!—Sir John, value yourſelf as you pleaſe upon your ancient houſe, I am to talk freely of every thing you are pleaſed to put into your bill of rates on this occaſion—Yet, Sir, I have no objections to your ſon's family—'tis his morals that I doubt.

Sir J. B. Sir, I can't help ſaying, that what might injure a citizen's credit, may be no ſtain to a gentleman's honour.

Mr. Sea. Sir John, the honour of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as ſmall a matter as the credit of a trader; we are talking of a marriage, and in ſuch a caſe, the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honour or credit of her lover—that he is a keeper——

Sir J. B. Mr. Sealand, don't take upon you to ſpoil my ſon's marriage with any woman elſe.

Mr. Sea. Sir John, let him apply to any woman elſe, and have as many miſtreſſes as he pleaſes——

Sir J. B. My ſon, Sir, is a diſcreet and ſober gentleman.

Mr. Sea. Sir, I never ſaw a man that wenched ſoberly and diſcreetly, that ever left it off——the decency obſerved in the practice, hides, even from the ſinner, the iniquity of it.

Sir J. B. But, my ſon, Sir, is, in the eye of the world, a gentleman of merit.

Mr. Sea. I own to you, I think him ſo.——But, Sir John, I am a man exerciſed and experienced in chances and diſaſters; I loſt, in my earlier years, a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant. This makes me, perhaps, over-cautious, to preſerve the ſecond bounty of Providence to me, and be as careful as I can of this child—You'll pardon me, my poor girl, Sir, is as valuable to me, as your boaſted ſon to you.

Sir J. B. Why, that's one very good reaſon, Mr. Sealand, why I wiſh my ſon had her.

Mr. Sea. There is nothing but this ſtrange lady here, this incognita, that can be objected to him—here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life, to that one paſſion.

Sir J. B. A man of my ſon's underſtanding cannot be ſuppoſed to be one of them.

Mr. Sea. Very wiſe men have been ſo enſlaved; and when a man marries with one of them upon his hands, whether moved from the demand of the world, or ſlighter reaſons; ſuch a huſband ſoils with his wife for a month perhaps——then good b'w'ye, Madam—the ſhew's over—Ah! John Dryden points out ſuch a huſband to a hair, where he ſays,

And while abroad ſo prodigal the dolt is,
Poor ſpouſe at home as ragged as a colt is.

Now, in plain terms, Sir, I ſhall not care to have my poor girl turned a grazing, and that muſt be the caſe when———

Sir J. B. But pray conſider, Sir, my ſon———

Mr. Sea. Look you, Sir, I'll make the matter ſhort. This unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him. But one way or other, he is, or has been, certainly engaged to her——I am therefore reſolved this very afternoon, to viſit her. Now from her behaviour, or appearance, I ſhall ſoon be let into what I may fear or hope for.

Sir J. B. Sir, I am very confident, there can be nothing inquired into, relating to my ſon, that will not, upon being underſtood, turn to his advantage.

Mr. Sea. I hope that as ſincerely, as you believe it—Sir John Bevil, when I am ſatisfied in this great point, if your ſon's conduct anſwers the character you give him, I ſhall wiſh your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great-Britain; and ſo your ſervant. [*Exit.*

Sir J. B. He is gone in a way but barely civil;

but his great wealth, and the merit of his only child, the heireſs of it, are not to be loſt for a little peeviſhneſs——— [*Exit.*

SCENE, Bevil junior's *Lodging.*

Enter Tom *and* Phillis.

Tom. Well, Madam, if you muſt ſpeak with Mr. Myrtle, you ſhall; he is now with my maſter in the library.

Phil. But you muſt leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a preſent, nor I ſo handſomely take any thing from him, before you; it would not be decent.

Tom. It will be very decent indeed, for me to retire, and leave my miſtreſs with another man.

Phil. He is a gentleman, and will treat one properly.

Tom. I believe ſo——but, however, I won't be far off, and therefore will venture to truſt you; I'll call him to you. [*Exit* Tom.

Phil. What a deal of pother and ſputter here is, between my miſtreſs and Mr. Myrtle! I could any hour of the day get her to her lover, and would do it———but ſhe, forſooth, will allow no plot to get him; but if he can come to her, I know ſhe would be glad of it; I muſt therefore do her an acceptable violence, and ſurprize her into his arms. I am ſure I go by the beſt rule imaginable: if ſhe were my maid, I ſhould think her the beſt ſervant in the world, for doing ſo by me.

Enter Myrtle *and* Tom.

—Oh, Sir! You and Mr. Bevil are fine gentlemen, to let a lady remain under ſuch difficulties as my poor miſtreſs, and not attempt to ſet her at liberty, or releaſe her from the danger of being inſtantly married to Cimberton.

Myr. Tom has been telling—But what is to be done?

Phil. What is to be done——when a man can't come at his miſtreſs?——Why can't you fire our houſe, or the next houſe to us, to make us run out, and you take us?

Myr. How, Mrs. Phillis———

Phil. Ay——let me ſee that rogue deny to fire a houſe, make a riot, or any other little thing, when there were no other way to come at me.

Tom. I am obliged to you, Madam.

Phil. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themſelves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hanged for love?——Oh! were I a man———

Myr. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyſhip's notion of a man?

Phil. Only be at once, what, one time or other, you may be, and wiſh to be, and muſt be.

Myr. Dear girl, talk plainly to me; and conſider, I, in my condition, can't be in very good humour; ——you ſay, to be at once what I muſt be.

Phil. Ay, ay——I mean no more, than to be an old man; in a word, old Sir Geoffrey Cimberton is every hour expected in town, to join in the deeds and ſettlements, for marrying Mr. Cimberton——He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb; though, as to his paſſions and deſires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

Tom. Come, to the buſineſs, and don't keep the gentleman in ſuſpence for the pleaſure of being coutted, as you ſerve me.

Phil. I ſaw you at the maſquerade act ſuch a one to perfection. Go, and put on that very habit, and come to our houſe as Sir Geoffrey. There is not one there, but myſelf, knows his perſon; I was born in the pariſh where he is lord of the manor. I have ſeen him often and often at church, in the country. Do not heſitate; but come thither; they will think you bring a certain ſecurity againſt Mr. Myrtle, and you bring Mr. Myrtle; leave the reſt to me, I leave this with you; and expect—They don't, I told you, know you; they think you out of town, which you had as good be for ever, if you loſe this opportunity. —I muſt be gone; I know I am wanted at home.

Myr. My dear Phillis!

[*Catches and kiſſes her, and gives her money.*

Phil. Oh, fie! My kiſſes are not my own; you have committed violence; but I'll carry 'em to the right owner. [Tom *kiſſes her.*]——Come, ſee me down ſtairs. [*To* Tom.] and leave the lover to think of his laſt game for the prize.

[*Exeunt* Tom *and* Phillis.

Myr. I think I will inſtantly attempt this wild expedient———But I am ſo mortify'd at this conduct of mine towards poor Bevil; he muſt think meanly of me——I know not how to reaſſume myſelf, and be in ſpirit enough for ſuch an adventure as this——Yet I muſt attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda, under her preſent perplexities; and ſure———

The next delight to tranſport with the fair,
Is to relieve her, in her hours of care. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE, Sealand's *Houſe.*

Enter Phillis, *with Lights, before* Myrtle, *diſguiſed like old* Sir Geoffrey, *ſupported* by Mrs. Sealand, Lucinda, *and* Cimberton.

Mrs. Sea. NOW I have ſeen you thus far, Sir Geoffrey, will you excuſe me a moment, while I give my neceſſary orders for your accommodation? [*Exit* Mrs. Sealand.

Myr. I have not ſeen you, Couſin Cimberton, ſince you were ten years old; and as it is incumbent on you, to keep up your name and family, I ſhall, upon very reaſonable terms, join with you in a ſettlement to that purpoſe. Though I muſt tell you, couſin, this is the firſt merchant that has married into our houſe.

Luc. Deuce on 'em! am I a merchant, becauſe my father is? [*Aſide.*

Myr. But is he directly a trader at this time?

Cim. There's no hiding the diſgrace, Sir; he trades to all parts of the world.

Myr. We never had one of our family before, who deſcended from perſons that did any thing.

Cim. Sir, ſince it is a girl that they have, I am, for the honour of my family, willing to take it in again; and to ſink her into our name, and no harm done.

Myr. 'Tis prudently and generouſly reſolved.——Is this the young thing?

Cim. Yes, Sir.

Phil. Good Madam, don't be out of humour, but let them run to the utmoſt of their extravagance—Hear them out.

Myr. Can't I ſee her nearer? My eyes are but weak.

Phil. Beſide, I am ſure the uncle has ſomething worth your notice. I'll take care to get off the

young one, and leave you to obſerve what may be wrought out of the old one for your good. [*Exit.*

Cim. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, deſires to be introduced to you, and to ſee you nearer.—Approach, Sir.

Myr. By your leave young lady—[*Puts on ſpectacles.*]—Couſin Cimberton, ſhe has exactly that ſort of neck and boſom, for which my ſiſter Gertrude was ſo much admir'd in the year ſixty-one, before the French dreſſes firſt diſcovered any thing in women below the chin.

Luc. Chin, quotha!—I don't believe my paſſionate lover, there, knows whether I have one or not. Ha! ha!

Cim. Madam, I would not willingly offend; but I have a better glaſs— [*Pulls out a large one.*

Enter Phillis *to* Cimberton.

Phil. Sir, my lady deſires to ſhew the apartment to you, that ſhe intends for Sir Geoffrey.

Cim. Well, Sir, by that time you have ſufficiently gazed and ſunned yourſelf in the beauties of my ſpouſe, there, I will wait on you again.

[*Exit* Cim. *and* Phil.

Myr. Were it not, Madam, that I might be troubleſome, there is ſomething of importance, tho' we are alone, which I would ſay more ſafe from being heard.

Luc. There is ſomething in this old fellow, methinks, that raiſes my curioſity. [*Aſide.*

Myr. To be free, Madam, I as heartily contemn this kinſman of mine, as you do; and am ſorry to ſee ſo much beauty and merit devoted by your parents, to ſo inſenſible a poſſeſſor.

Luc. Surpriſing!—I hope then, Sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are ſo generous to pity, whatever may be the intereſt of your family.

Myr. This hand of mine ſhall never be employ'd to ſign any thing againſt your good and happineſs.

Luc. I am ſorry, Sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments; but there is a gentleman in the world, whoſe gratitude will, I am ſure, be worthy of the favour.

Myr. All the thanks I deſire, Madam, are in your power to give.

Luc. Name them, and command them.

Myr. Only, Madam, that the firſt time you are alone with your lover, you will with open arms receive him.

Luc. As willingly as heart could wiſh it.

Myr. Thus, then, he claims your promiſe. Oh, Lucinda!

Luc. Oh, a cheat, a cheat, a cheat!

Myr. Huſh! 'tis I, 'tis I, your lover, Myrtle himſelf, Madam.

Luc. Oh, bleſs me, what raſhneſs and folly to ſurpriſe me ſo—But huſh—my mother——

Enter Mrs. Sealand, Cimberton, *and* Phillis.

Mrs. Sea. How now! what's the matter?

Luc. Oh, Madam! as ſoon as you left the room, my uncle fell into a ſudden fit; and—and—ſo I cry'd out for help to ſupport him, and conduct him to his chamber.

Mrs. Sea. That was kindly done. Alas, Sir! how do you find yourſelf?

Myr. Never was taken in ſo odd a way in my life——Pray lead me—Oh, I was talking here—pray carry me—to my couſin Cimberton's young lady——

[Cimberton *and* Lucinda *lead him, as one in pain.*

Cim. Pox, uncle! you will pull my ear off.

Luc. Pray, uncle! you will ſqueeze me to death.

Mrs. Sea. No matter, no matter—he knows not what he does. Come, Sir, ſhall I help you out?

Myr. By no means; I'll trouble nobody but my young couſins here. [Cim. *and* Luc. *lead him off.*

SCENE, *Charing-Croſs.*

Enter Mr. Sealand *and* Humphrey.

Mr. Sea. I am very glad, Mr. Humphrey, that you agree with me, that it is for our common good, I ſhould look thoroughly into this matter.

Humph. I am, indeed, of that opinion; for there is no artifice, nothing concealed in our family, which ought in juſtice to be known; I need not deſire you, Sir, to treat the lady with care and reſpect.

Mr. Sea. Maſter Humphrey—I ſhall not be rude, tho' I deſign to be a little abrupt, and come into the matter at once, to ſee how ſhe will bear upon a ſurpriſe——

Humph. That's the door; Sir, I wiſh you ſucceſs. [*Exit.*

Mr. Sea. [*Knocks.*] I'll carry this matter with an air of authority, to enquire, tho' I make an errand to begin diſcourſe. [*Knocks again, enter a foot-boy.*] So, young man; is your lady within?

Boy. Alack, Sir! I am but a country boy——I don't know whether ſhe is or noa; but an you'll ſtay a bit, I'll goa, and aſk the gentlewoman that's with her.

Mrs. Sea. Why, ſirrah, tho' you are a country boy, you can ſee, can't you? You know whether ſhe is at home, when you ſee her, don't you?

Boy. Nay, nay, I'm not ſuch a country lad neither, maſter, to think ſhe is at home, becauſe I ſee her. I have been in town but a month, and I loſt one place already, for believing my own eyes.

Mr. Sea. Why, ſirrah, have you learnt to lye already?

Boy. Ah, maſter! things that are lyes in the country, are not lyes at London—I begin to know my buſineſs a little better than ſo——but an you pleaſe to walk in, I'll call a gentlewoman to you, that can tell you for certain—ſhe can make bold to aſk my lady herſelf.

Mr. Sea. Oh, then, ſhe is within, I find, tho' you dare not ſay ſo.

Boy. Nay, nay, that's neither here nor there; what's matter whether ſhe is within or no, if ſhe has not a mind to ſee any body?

Mr. Sea. I can't tell, ſirrah, whether you are arch or ſimple; but, however, get me a direct anſwer, and here's a ſhilling for you.

Boy. Will you pleaſe to walk in, I'll ſee what I can do for you.

Mr. Sea. I ſee you will be fit for your buſineſs in time, child. But I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinaries in ſuch a houſe.

Boy. Such a houſe, Sir! you han't ſeen it yet. Pray walk in.

Mr. Sea. Sir, I'll wait upon you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, Indiana's *Houſe.*

Enter Iſabella *and* Boy.

Iſ. So, Daniel, what news with you?

Boy. Madam, there's a gentleman below would ſpeak with my lady.

Iſ. Sirrah, don't you know Mr. Bevil yet?

Boy. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman who comes every day, and aſks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

If. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before. Well, be it who it will, let him come up to me.

[*Exit* Boy; *and re-enters with* Mr. Sealand, Iſabella *looks amaz'd.*

Mr. Sea. Madam, I can't blame your being a little ſurpris'd to ſee a perfect ſtranger make a viſit, and———

If. I am indeed ſurpris'd———I ſee he does not know me. [*Aſide.*

Mr. Sea. You are very prettily lodg'd here, Madam; in troth you ſeem to have every thing in plenty———a thouſand a year, I warrant you, upon this pretty neſt of rooms, and the dainty one within them. [*Aſide, and looking about.*

If. [*Aſide.*] Twenty years, it ſeems, have leſs effect in the alteration of a man of thirty, than of a girl of fourteen—he's almoſt ſtill the ſame;—How ſhall I contain my ſurpriſe and ſatisfaction!—He muſt not know me yet.

Mr. Sea. Madam, I hope I don't give you any diſturbance; but there is a young lady here, with whom I have a particular buſineſs to diſcourſe, and I hope ſhe will admit me to that favour.

If. Why, Sir, have you had any notice concerning her? I wonder who could give it you.

Mr. Sea. That, Madam, is fit only to be communicated to herſelf.

If. Well, Sir, you ſhall ſee her——You ſhall ſee her preſently, Sir; for now I am as a mother, and will truſt her with you. [*Exit.*

Mr. Sea. As a mother! right; that's the old phraſe for one of thoſe commode ladies, who lend out beauty for hire, to young gentlemen that have preſſing occaſions. But here comes the precious lady herſelf. In troth, a very ſightly woman.

Enter Indiana.

Ind. I am told, Sir, you have ſome affair that requires your ſpeaking with me.

Mr. Sea. Yes, Madam. There came to my hands a bill drawn by Mr. Bevil, which is payable to-morrow; and he, in the intercourſe of buſineſs, ſent it to me, who have caſh of his, and deſired me to ſend a ſervant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myſelf.

Ind. Sir, was that neceſſary?

Mr. Sea. No, Madam; but to be free with you, the fame of your beauty, and the regard which Mr. Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curioſity.

Ind. Too well known to have for me! Your ſober appearance, Sir, which my friend deſcrib'd, made me expect no rudeneſs, or abſurdity at leaſt—Who's there? Sir, if you pay the money to a ſervant, 'twill be as well.

Mr. Sea. Pray, Madam, be not offended; I came hither on an innocent, nay a virtuous deſign; and, if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as uſeful to you, as you are in friendſhip with Mr. Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day diſpoſing of.

Ind. You make me hope, Sir, I have miſtaken you: I am compos'd again; be free, ſay on—what I am afraid to hear. [*Aſide.*

Mr. Sea. I fear'd, indeed, an unwarranted paſſion here, but I did not think it was in abuſe of ſo worthy an object, ſo accompliſh'd a lady, as your ſenſe and mien beſpeak—but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to ſhame, ſo they gratify———

Ind. Sir—you are going into very great errors—but, as you are pleas'd to ſay you ſee ſomething in me that has chang'd, at leaſt, the colour of your ſuſpicions, ſo has your appearance alter'd mine, and made me earneſtly attentive to what has any way concern'd you, to enquire into my affairs and character.

Mr. Sea. How ſenſibly! with what an air ſhe talks!

Ind. Good Sir, be ſeated—and tell me tenderly—keep all your ſuſpicions concerning me alive, that you may in a proper and prepared way, acquaint me why the care of your daughter obliges a perſon of your ſeeming worth and fortune, to be thus inquiſitive about a wretched, helpleſs, friendleſs——[*Weeping.*]—but I beg your pardon—tho' I am an orphan, your child is not; and your concern for her, it ſeems, has brought you hither—I'll be compos'd——pray go on, Sir.

Mr. Sea. How could Mr. Bevil be ſuch a monſter, to injure ſuch a woman!

Ind. No, Sir; you wrong him; he has not injured me—my ſupport is from his bounty.

Mr. Sea. Bounty! When gluttons give high prices for delicates, they are prodigious bountiful!

Ind. Still, ſtill you will perſiſt in that error—But my own fears tell me all—You are the gentleman, I ſuppoſe, for whoſe happy daughter he is deſign'd a huſband, by his good father; and he has, perhaps, conſented to the overture, and he is to be, perhaps, this night a bridegroom.

Mr. Sea. I own he was intended ſuch: but, Madam, on your account, I am determined to defer my daughter's marriage, till I am ſatisfied from your own mouth of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

Ind. His actions, Sir, his eyes, have only made me think he deſign'd to make me the partner of his heart. The goodneſs and gentleneſs of his demeanour made me miſinterpret all; 'twas my own hope, my own paſſion, that deluded me; he never made one amorous advance to me; his large heart, and beſtowing hand, have only help'd the miſerable: nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care, the object on which to indulge and pleaſe himſelf with pouring favours.

Mr. Sea. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am, methinks, afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the ſame thing, as if we had talk'd never ſo diſtinctly——he ne'er ſhall have a daughter of mine.

Ind. If you ſay this from what you think of me, you wrong yourſelf and him. Let not me, miſerable though I may be, do injury to my benefactor: no, Sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you to his virtues—If to beſtow without a proſpect of return; if to delight in ſupporting, what might, perhaps, be thought an object of deſire, with no other view than to be her guard againſt thoſe who would not be ſo diſintereſted; if theſe actions, Sir, can in a careful parent's eye commend him to a daughter, give yours, Sir; give her to my honeſt, generous Bevil.—What have I to do, but ſigh, and weep, to rave, run wild, a lunatick in chains, or hid in darkneſs, mutter in diſtracted ſtarts, and broken accents, my ſtrange, ſtrange ſtory!

Mr. Sea. Take comfort, Madam.

Ind. All my comfort muſt be to expoſtulate in madneſs, to relieve with frenzy my deſpair; and, ſhrieking, to demand of fate, why, why was I born to ſuch variety of ſorrows?

Mr. Sea. If I have been the leaſt occaſion——

Ind. No: 'twas Heaven's high will I ſhould be ſuch——To be plunder'd in my cradle; toſs'd on the ſeas; and, even there, an infant captive, to loſe my mother, hear but of my father——To be

adopted; loſe my adopter; then plunged again in worſe calamities!

Mr. Sea. An infant captive!

Ind. Yet then, to find the moſt charming of mankind, once more to ſet me free, from what I thought the laſt diſtreſs, to load me with his ſervices, his bounties, and his favours; to ſupport my very life, in a way that ſtole, at the ſame time, my very ſoul itſelf from me.

Mr. Sea. And has young Bevil been this worthy man?

Ind. Yet then again; this very man to take another, without leaving me the right, the pretence of eaſing my fond heart with tears?——For, oh! I can't reproach him, though the ſame hand that raiſed me to this height now throws me down the precipice.

Mr. Sea. Dear lady! Oh, yet one moment's patience; my heart grows full with your affliction! But yet there's ſomething in your ſtory that promiſes relief when you leaſt hope it.

Ind. My portion here is bitterneſs and ſorrow.

Mr. Sea. Do not think ſo. Pray anſwer me: Does Bevil know your name and family?

Ind. Alas, too well! Oh, could I be any other thing than what I am——I'll tear away all traces of my former ſelf, my little ornaments, the remains of my firſt ſtate, the hints of what I ought to have been——

[*In her diſorder ſhe throws away her bracelet, which* Sealand *takes up, and looks earneſtly at it.*

Mr. Sea. Ha! what's this? My eyes are not deceiv'd! It is, it is the ſame; the very bracelet which I bequeath'd my wife at our laſt mournful parting.

Ind. What ſaid you, Sir? Your wife! Whither does my fancy carry me? What means this new-felt motion at my heart? And yet again my fortune but deludes me; for, if I err not, Sir, your name is Sealand: but my loſt father's name was—

Mr. Sea. Danvers; was it not?

Ind. What new amazement! That is, indeed, my family.

Mr. Sea. Know, then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reaſons too tedious now to mention, I chang'd my name of Danvers into Sealand.

Enter Iſabella.

Iſ. If yet there wants an explanation of your wonder, examine well this face—yours, Sir, I well remember——Gaze on, and read in me, your ſiſter Iſabella.

Mr. Sea. My ſiſter!

Iſ. But here's a claim more tender yet—your Indiana, Sir, your long loſt daughter.

Mr. Sea. Oh, my child, my child!

Ind. All-gracious Heaven! Is it poſſible! Do I embrace my father!

Mr. Sea. And do I hold thee!—Theſe paſſions are too ſtrong for utterance—Riſe, riſe, my child, and give my tears their way——Oh, my ſiſter!

[*Embracing her.*

Iſ. Now, deareſt niece, if I have wrong'd thy noble lover with too hard ſuſpicions, my juſt concern for thee, I hope, will plead my pardon.

Mr. Sea. Oh, make him then the full amends, and be yourſelf the meſſenger of joy: fly this inſtant—tell him all theſe wond'rous turns of Providence in his favour; tell him I have now a daughter to beſtow, which he no longer will decline; that this day he ſtill ſhall be a bridegroom: nor ſhall a fortune, the merit which his father ſeeks, be wanting. Tell him, the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance. [*Exit* Iſabella.] My deareſt Indiana! [*Turns and embraces her.*

Ind. Have I then, at laſt, a father's ſanction on my love? His bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a preſent worthy of Bevil's generoſity?

Mr. Sea. Oh, my child! how are our ſorrows paſt o'erpaid by ſuch a meeting! Though I have loſt ſo many years of ſoft paternal dalliance with thee, yet, in one day to find thee thus, and thus beſtow thee, in ſuch perfect happineſs, is ample, ample reparation; and yet again, the merit of thy lover—

Ind. Oh, had I ſpirits left to tell you of his actions; the pride, the joy of his alliance, Sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquer'd mine.

Mr. Sea. How laudable is love, when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him——

Ind. See, Sir, my aunt already has ſucceeded, and brought him to your wiſhes.

Enter Iſabella, *with* Sir John Bevil, Bevil junior, Mrs. Sealand, Cimberton, Myrtle, *and* Lucinda.

Sir J. B. [*Entering.*] Where? Where's this ſcene of wonder?——Mr. Sealand, I congratulate, on this occaſion, our mutual happineſs—Your good ſiſter, Sir, has, with the ſtory of your daughter's fortune, fill'd us with ſurprize and joy. Now all exceptions are remov'd; my ſon has now avow'd his love, and turn'd all former jealouſies and doubts to approbation; and, I am told, your goodneſs has conſented to reward him.

Mr. Sea. If, Sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes can make this object worthy his acceptance.

B. jun. I hear you mention, Sir, of fortune, with pleaſure, only as it may prove the means to reconcile the beſt of fathers to my love; let him be provident, but let me be happy—My ever deſtin'd, my acknowledg'd wife! [*Embracing* Indiana.

Ind. Wife——Oh, my ever loved, my lord, my maſter!

Sir J. B. I congratulate myſelf, as well as you, that I have a ſon, who could, under ſuch diſadvantages, diſcover your great merit.

Mr. Sea. Oh, Sir John, how vain, how weak, is human prudence! What care, what foreſight, what imagination, could contrive ſuch bleſt events to make our children happy, as Providence in one ſhort hour has laid before us?

Cim. [*To Mrs.* Sealand.] I am afraid, Madam, Mr. Sealand is a little too buſy for our affair; if you pleaſe, we'll take another opportunity.

Mrs. Sea. Let us have patience, Sir.

Cim. But we make Sir Geoffrey wait, Madam.

Myr. Oh, Sir, I'm not in haſte.

[*During this* Bev. jun. *preſents* Lucinda *to* Indiana.

Mr. Sea. But here; here's our general benefactor. Excellent young man, that could be, at once, a lover to her beauty, and a parent to her virtue!

B. jun. If you think that an obligation, Sir, give me leave to overpay myſelf, in the only inſtance that can now add to my felicity, by begging you to beſtow this lady on Mr. Myrtle.

Mr. Sea. She is without his reſerve; I beg he may be ſent for—Mr. Cimberton, notwithſtanding you never had my conſent, yet there is, ſince I ſaw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

Cim. I hope, Sir, your lady, has conceal'd nothing from me?

Mr. Sea. Troth, Sir, nothing but what was conceal'd from myſelf; another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my eſtate.

Cim. How, Mr. Sealand! Why then if half Mrs. Lucinda's fortune is gone, you can't say that any of my estate is settled upon her; I was in treaty for the whole: but if that is not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain—Sir—I have nothing to do but to take my leave of your good lady, my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

Myr. That you have, Mr. Cimberton, with all my heart. [*Discovers himself.*

Omnes. Mr. Myrtle!

Myr. And I beg pardon of the whole company, that I assumed the person of Sir Geoffrey, only to be present at the danger of this lady's being disposed of, and in her utmost exigence to assert my right to her; which if her parents will ratify, as they once favour'd my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value to me.

Luc. Generous man!

Mr. Sea. If, Sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one who has meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is yours.

Luc. Mr. Myrtle, tho' you have ever had my heart, yet now I find I love you more, because I deserve you less.

Mrs. Sea. Well, however I'm glad the girl's disposed of any way. [*Aside.*

B. jun. Myrtle, no longer rivals now, but brothers.

Myr. Dear Bevil, you are born to triumph over me: but now our competition ceases; I rejoice in the pre-eminence of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

Sir J. B. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example. Your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit; and the several difficulties you have struggled with, evidently shew,

Whate'er the generous mind itself denies,
The secret care of Providence supplies.

[*Exeunt.*

7 MA 55